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IRANIAN CONSIDERATIONS FOR WARGAMING FROM THE IRANIAN  
PERSPECTIVE

by

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A paper submitted to the faculty of the Naval War College  
in satisfaction of the requirements for the Advanced Research  
Program.

The contents of this paper reflect our own personal views  
and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the  
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**March 1994**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This paper provides Iranian considerations for war gaming from the Iranian perspective. The purpose of this paper is to provide the player representing Iran with a national security strategy. To do this, the paper begins with an analysis of Iran's political aims and military capabilities for the next ten years. This analysis leads to a strategy that can be used to fight Iranian assets at the national level to achieve its goals. Therefore, it does not discuss fighting Iranian forces at the tactical level.

Iran's military capability is in a rebuilding phase and is defensive in nature. Iran is seeking weapons of mass destruction to provide added Regional deterrence.

Iran has four national security goals: maintaining the Islamic Revolution, national defense, leadership in Persian Gulf security, and gaining influence in Central Asian economics. The military strategies that Iran can use to achieve these goals are diplomacy with intimidation, deterrence, and covert, guerrilla activities.

Iran has many problems that it must overcome to achieve its national goals. Regional dynamics present both opportunities and challenges as Iran fights to regain its position as a dominant Regional power.

## PREFACE

The purpose of this paper is to provide a framework for fighting Iranian military forces at the national level. Our intent has been to furnish the reader with sufficient background to feel comfortable without getting overwhelmed by too many details. This paper does not contain a comprehensive order of battle data base. Nor will the reader find specific formulas to use for specific scenarios. Rather, we have tried to portray the Iranian "mind set." This paper provides an assessment of Iran's political aims and military capabilities with a national security strategy that the reader can use for any scenario.

We wrote this paper in the first person possessive to add emphasis to our arguments. The perspective is from a moderate Iranian/Persian/Shiite, under the protection of non-attribution for his objective assessment. Therefore, this paper acknowledges that Iran has some serious problems.

To produce a current viewpoint, we primarily used sources printed in the last two years. We reviewed all of the available information in both the classified and unclassified channels and determined that the classified material would not make a significant contribution to our paper. Instead, we felt that the value of this paper would increase if its distribution was not limited by the tight control associated with classified material.

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## PART I

### INTRODUCTION

This part explains the background required to understand how we view our current situation. Figure 1 shows our central location in the Region. Currently, we have tremendous problems, both foreign and domestic. Our foreign problems on our borders include: the threat of war between Pakistan and India, a civil war in Afghanistan, instability on the northern frontier with the Central Asian republics, war in Azerbaijan and Armenia, Kurdish separatism, a long border with Iraq, and the fractured politics of the Gulf states. The differences in Islam between the Sunni and the Shiites complicate our involvement in foreign affairs. Domestically, we have political, economic, and military problems. Our internal politics are divided among radicals, conservatives, and moderates, all with different agendas. Economically, our Islamic revolution has not improved conditions. Militarily, our armed forces suffered tremendous damage during the Eight-year war.\*

Chapter I is background material. Without understanding the issues that shape our country, it is difficult to understand how these issues affect our policies. Our policies are also shaped by recent events. Chapter II covers four

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\* The Eight-year war is the Iran-Iraq war. The war started on 22 September 1980 and the cease fire began on 20 July 1988.

recent events that influenced our country and the Region. The final chapter, Chapter III, analyzes the background issues and recent events to determine our internal and external vulnerabilities.

## PART I

### CHAPTER I

#### BACKGROUND

We have many problems that are a part of our long history. These problems include invasions or interventions in our internal affairs by foreign powers, ethnic, cultural, and Islamic differences, fractured internal politics, and economic shortcomings.

Invasions and Foreign Intervention. We have been invaded many times. More recently, we have been subjected to foreign influence in our internal politics. This involvement by foreigners in our country has shaped our political outlook.

We have been subjected to many foreign conquests. These invasions started over two thousand years ago with Alexander the Great, followed by the humiliating Arab conquest under early Islam, the Mongol hordes of Genghis Khan and Tamerlane, the powerful armies of the Seljuk Turks, the humiliating Afghan invasion, and finally capped by British and Russian domination and occupation.<sup>1</sup> Note these invasions have come from every cardinal direction. Recent invasions have assumed a more subtle form, that of influence in our internal politics.

We have been under foreign domination for most of this century.<sup>2</sup> In 1921, both the British and the Russians brought Reza Shah Pahlavi to power. In 1941 when he refused to break

ties with Nazi Germany, Britain and Russia forced him to abdicate to his son, Muhammad Reza Pahlavi. After the war, the Soviet Union tried to establish Azerbaijani and Kurdish regimes in our country.<sup>3</sup> The Shah lost power in 1951; however, the United States restored the Shah to power in 1953.<sup>\*</sup> This support gave the United States influence on our internal and external policies.<sup>4</sup> During the Islamic revolution in 1979 we finally rid our nation of foreign influence.

Through all these invasions, we have survived as a nation and a culture. However, these invasions have affected our political culture. Even outside experts on our country have recognized the impact of invasions and foreign involvement. Our traditional statecraft places a premium on a complex, multilayered, and suspicious political outlook. Our traditional attribution of labyrinthine motivations to all political actors forces us to excel at playing one force against another. We are experts at whispering in the ear of one foreign party in order to heighten the suspicions of the other.<sup>5</sup> It is only through the skillful use of diplomacy,

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<sup>\*</sup> In 1951, Muhammad Mossadeq was elected prime minister. In 1953, in an attempt to protect his power, he dissolved the Majlis (parliament) and tried to take over the government. The Shah was forced to flee the country. With the support of the Central Intelligence Agency the Shah's loyalists in the military defeated the military units controlled by Mossadeq. Daniel C. Diller, ed., The Middle East 7th ed. (Washington: Congressional Quarterly Inc, 1991), p. 151.

statecraft, and military power that our nation and culture still exists.

Ethnic Differences. We are a multiethnic nation.\* A macro view of the Region around our borders shows that our ethnic groups are split by international boundaries. Four large minority ethnic groups exist both in Iran and across our international borders with our neighboring states: Kurds, Azeris, Arabs, and Baluchs.

The most vocal and publicized of our ethnic minority groups are the Kurds. Kurds are located in Turkey, Iraq, Syria and Iran, and they want to create their own nation called Kurdistan." Fortunately, there is no Kurdish leader with sufficient recognition to gain international support for their nationalist movement. No central leader exists because Kurds are divided among themselves and untrusting of each other."" In addition, they have no outside support from a nation that wants to see an independent Kurdistan.

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\* See Figure 2.

" Kurdistan has never existed as a nation.

"" Turkey is trying to crush this Kurdish independence movement in their country led by the Kurdish Workers Party. But the Iraqi Kurds depend on routes through Turkey for connections to the outside world. To survive, the Iraqi Kurds have cooperated with Turkish forces to expel Turkish Kurds from the border area; thus, Kurds are now fighting Kurds. John Darnton, "Almost a Nation: Kurds Rebuilding Their Shattered Land in Northern Iraq," The New York Times, 21 January 1994, p. A8.

The second minority ethnic group is the Azeris, the majority of whom are located in northern Iran, Azerbaijan, and Armenia. We have more Azeris than their own homeland, Azerbaijan.<sup>6</sup> Like the Kurds, the Azeri nationalists want to form one nation with all Azeris inside its borders. In 1946, we crushed an Azeri separatist movement and the Azeris have been loyal Iranians ever since.\*

The third minority group is the Arabs. The Arab community is located in southern Iran and along the Gulf coast where much of our petroleum wealth is found. They have shown little interest in a separatist movement despite encouragement from outside powers to join with other Arabs. During the Eight-year war, Iraq failed to get the Arab minority inside Iran to join them against us.

The fourth minority group is the Baluchs. The Baluchs are located along our eastern border as well as in Pakistan and Afghanistan. Afghanistan has encouraged the Baluchs to create an independent Baluchistan, which would largely be inside Pakistan and Iran. Like our Arabs, Iranian Baluchs have shown little interest in a separatist movement. Pakistani Baluchs, however, do have a separatist movement which is a source of friction between Pakistan and Afghanistan.<sup>7</sup>

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\* This movement failed because the Soviet Union withdrew their forces after strong protests from the United States. Diller, p. 151.

Cultural Differences. We are one of the longest existing civilizations in the world and our culture is older and much more sophisticated than that of our neighbors. Our culture dates back to at least 600 BC. Until this century, Persia was the name of our famous ancient country. At the foundation of our culture are Persians, who are the majority ethnic group in our country. Persians are located throughout Iran, Afghanistan and Tajikistan. Persians have not and will not assimilate other peoples. However, our minority ethnic groups have benefitted from exposure to our culture. Our neighbors, Arabs and Turks, have assimilated different ethnic groups.<sup>\*</sup> This makes them less pure.

Until the discovery of oil Arabs were bedouins of the desert. It was oil that brought them out of the desert. Therefore, their culture is much less sophisticated. Most Arabs are still lazy and uncivilized.<sup>\*</sup> Iranian Arabs have benefitted from our glorious culture; therefore, they are superior to other Arabs. But, an Iranian Arab is not the equal of an Iranian Persian. Turkish culture is also inferior to ours. Turks are nomads, people of the steppe. Because of their barbaric history, we consider Turks our opposites, such as the basic division between light and dark. Turks are

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<sup>\*</sup> The term, Arab, has evolved and does not define a pure culture. Arab used to mean bedouins from the Arabian peninsula. When Islam swept through the region, the term Arab expanded to mean Egyptians, Syrians, and Iraqis. They are often referred to as "eaters of lizards." Graham E. Fuller, The "Center of the Universe" The Geopolitics of Iran (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1991), p. 16.



sluggards, slow witted and incapable of subtlety and refinement.' With such neighbors, it is clear why we have no natural friends.

Islamic Differences. Although Islam has many divisions, most Moslems are Sunni.\* The largest minority is Shiite. Most of the Middle East nations are Sunni with small Shiite communities. As a Shiite nation, we are the exception.<sup>10</sup>

This division between Sunni and Shiite Moslems started with a dispute over the succession of Muhammad, the messenger from God. The result of this split created irreconcilable differences between Sunni and Shiite." Religious beliefs in the foundation of the two sects are the same. Both believe in Mohammed and the Koran.<sup>11</sup> However, the " . . . Sunni religious leaders are not self supporting, have no priestly

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\* See Figure 3.

" When Muhammad died, he left no successor or methods to choose a successor. Two camps arose. The first camp claimed that the leader should be chosen according to the prestige and power of his family or position in the tribal system. This option prevailed and is the basis of succession for the Sunni. The second camp argued that the successor had to be part of Mohammed's family, a succession by bloodline. When Mohammed's son-in-law, Ali finally became the caliph, he was assassinated. His eldest son, Hasan, succeeded him. He was challenged by a rival, Mu'awiyah, and Hasan abdicated to him. Before Mu'awiyah died, he named his son, Yasid, as the successor to the caliphate. Hasan's younger brother, Husayn, rose up in rebellion, was defeated, was tortured, and was slain in Karbala, Iraq in 680 A.D. This abomination led to the creation of the Sh'ia faction, the "partisans of Ali." Sh'ias are also called Shiites. Thomas W. Lippman. Understanding Islam: An Introduction to the Moslem World, (New York: NAL Penguin INC, 1982), pp. 142-143 and Diller, p. 127.

hierarchy, are not politically organized, and have no history of political activism. Their record generally is one of religious orientation and support of the established political order."<sup>12</sup>

Shiites are much different. Our religious leaders are not financially dependent on the government; therefore, they can oppose the existing government. They have a priestly hierarchy and the celebration of feast days gives the clergy a captive audience to present their views. Shiites admire and even desire martyrdom. They believe in saints and worship at the tombs of holy men.\* Historically, Shiites have felt no responsibility to support government activities.

Internal Politics. Our clergy currently control the government."<sup>13</sup> Our government has one party divided into three major groups. There are the radicals, the conservatives, and the moderates. Radicals want a forced morality under Islamic law. In addition, the radicals want an economic policy based on self sufficiency, income redistribution, and a state

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\* Shiites believe in the return of the Imam, a spiritual leader sent by God to guide them. Shiites believe an Imam has always existed, but has been hidden from human perception until his return to preside over a perfected society. In Shiism religious leaders can "be accorded some of the spiritual and temporal authority of the Imamate. Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini achieved this status. This can only happen in a Shiite society, no methods exist for this to happen in a Sunni society." Lippman, pp. 145-148.

<sup>13</sup> See Appendix I for a detailed explanation of our current political system.

controlled economy. Radicals want an isolationist policy toward the West and conservative Arab regimes. They favor export of the revolution, support radical movements, and bitterly oppose the United States and Israel. Conservatives want the clerics to return to their traditional role which is outside politics.\* They also support rigid Islamic social standards such as traditional dress for women. They want the clergy to separate itself from the government. The moderates want a peer enforced morality of Islamic law -- social pressure rather than the state enforces the standards. Their economic policy is based on a return to a market oriented economy.<sup>13</sup> Moderates favor normalization with the international community. The radicals had control of the government from 1979 until 1992. Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani, a moderate, became president in 1989, but he did not have a moderate majority in the Majlis, our parliament, until the 1992 elections.<sup>14</sup>

Economic Problems. Large petroleum reserves, our goestrategic position, and basic self sufficiency make us an economic power." Despite our abundant resources, we have

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\* Traditionally, the role of the clergy was outside the existing government. The clergy used their outside role as a form of political expression. Now the clergy directly participates in the government; hence, the role of the clergy has changed to one that dominates the existing government.

" Iran is a hub for trade routes between the Far East, Central Asia, and Europe. Iran has 60 years of oil and 400  
(continued...)

serious economic problems. Our standard of living has dropped 40 percent since the fall of the Shah.<sup>15</sup> These problems are related to the Eight-year war, previous economic policies, and falling oil prices.

The Eight-year war is the primary reason for our poor economic position. Most of the war was fought on our soil. Our infrastructure was severely damaged. Roads were heavily damaged due to increased military traffic.<sup>16</sup> Many cities in western Iran were destroyed.\* The capital required to rebuild our country is tremendous." To find the needed capital for reconstruction, President Rafsanjani turned the focus of economic reform from state enterprise, a radical economic policy, to the pursuit of oil production.<sup>17</sup>

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"(...continued)  
years of gas remaining if production remains stable. "Oil and Gas Exploration Centers on Borders," MEED Middle East Business Weekly, (UK: EMAP Business Information Ltd.), 7 August 1992. See also Central Intelligence Agency, Atlas of the Middle East (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, January 1993) pp. 10-11.

\* 52 cities were damaged, six of them were completely leveled. Approximately 4000 villages were damaged, and many of them were totally leveled. Hooshang Amirahmadi, "Economic destruction and imbalances in post-revolutionary Iran," Reconstruction and Regional Diplomacy in the Persian Gulf Hoosang Amirahmadi and Nadar Entessar ed., (London: Routledge, 1992), p. 82

" The official estimated total economic damage, both direct and indirect, is 870 billion dollars. During this period Iran made less than 145 billion dollars in oil revenues. Hoosang Amirahmadi and Nadar Entessar, "Introduction," Reconstruction and Regional Diplomacy in the Persian Gulf, Hoosang Amirahmadi and Nadar Entessar ed., (London: Routledge, 1992), p. 9.

President Rafsanjani has made economic growth the number one priority for his government. We have two primary challenges that affect our potential for economic growth -- tremendous capital needs and few means to generate capital.\* The fastest way to raise capital is to sell more oil. However, the price of oil has continued to drop, which means less revenue, which means slower or less reconstruction. On a positive note, we have adopted a realistic exchange rate for the rial and we have allowed expatriates to come and go freely." In addition, our GNP for 1993 rose by 6.3%. The GNP growth for the past four years has averaged 8.1%. However, economic conditions for our average citizen have not yet reached the level that existed under the Shah.<sup>18</sup>

Conclusion. We have faced many of these problems throughout our long history. Right now, we are free from foreign interference. Our ethnic groups are still a source of instability. Our cultural differences prevent us from forming

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\* Iran's capital needs include reconstruction costs of the Iran - Iraq war and the 1990 earthquake, public investments in inefficient and unnecessary state - owned enterprises, and a rapid population growth. Iran's shortage of capital stems from low savings, declining income from oil, limited prospects for borrowing, and poor conditions for foreign investment. Patrick Clawson, Iran's Challenge to the West: How, When, and Why. (Washington: The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 1993), Policy Papers, Number 33, pp. 29-35.

" Immediately after the revolution, many of the elite fled Iran. To right the wrongs of the Shah, the elite were being stripped of their prestige and money. This caused the elite to leave Iran. President Rafsanjani has invited many of the elite back to Iran to help in the reconstruction. IBID, p. 35.

close ties with any state. The rift between the Sunnis and Shiites continues to prejudice our involvement in Regional affairs. The nature of our internal politics still present widely divergent views. Economic conditions complicate our ability to reconstruct our country. An understanding of these differences is critical to understand our view of the internal and external difficulties we face.

## CHAPTER II

### RECENT EVENTS

Four recent events have affected us. The Eight-year war changed the balance of power in the Gulf because Iraq replaced us as the dominant regional power in the Gulf. In 1990, Iraq invaded Kuwait. The resulting Gulf War decimated Iraq and gave us an opportunity to regain our position as the dominant regional power. In 1992, the breakup of the former Soviet Union created an opportunity for us. We can enhance our status as a regional power if we can expand our influence into Central Asia. Finally, the Arab - Israeli peace negotiations could have a significant impact on the balance of power in the region. All these events have affected our status as a regional power.\*

Eight-year War. This war had four effects for us and the Region. First, Iraq became the dominant regional power at our expense. This forced us to reassess our policy. As a result reconstruction of our country became more important than the export of the Revolution. In addition, the radicals, who controlled our government from 1979, lost their power and assumed the minority role in our internal politics.

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\* Chapter VI includes an analysis of lessons learned from the Eight-year and Gulf Wars.

Finally, we shed our isolationist's stance and started working to resume relations with other countries.

We fought Iraq for eight long bloody years, and in 1988, we accepted unilaterally the United Nation's terms for a cease fire.<sup>19</sup> We had to accept the cease fire because Iraq, with outside support, was growing stronger and we were growing weaker.\* When we accepted the cease fire, we lost our position as the dominant regional power. Both the GCC and Western nations clearly viewed Iraq as the winner and as a result, Iraq was seen as the regional power in the Gulf.

During this war we engaged in a policy of intervention. We tried to export our Revolution to other states in the region.\*\* This destabilized our neighbors. Our attempts created fear, which made us a common enemy that could overcome other political problems between these Gulf states. A direct result of this fear was the creation of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC).<sup>20</sup> Although the GCC was supposed to remain

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\* Iranian soldiers were unwilling and unable to continue the fight. Iran was less effective on defense and the Iraqi offensive was growing stronger. Shahram Chubin, "Iran and the War: From Stalemate to Cease-fire," Iran at the Crossroads, Miron Rezun ed., (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1990), pp. 142-143.

\*\* Iran made repeated calls for Shiites to rise in revolt against their illegitimate Sunni governments in Kuwait, UAE, Oman, Iraq, and Bahrain. In 1981 Iran tried to overthrow the Bahrain government. In 1983 Iran supported a abortive coup in Qatar. In 1982 and 1987 Iranian Shiites tried to depose the corrupt Saudi royal family during the Hajj. (The Hajj is a pilgrimage to Mecca.) Miron Rezun, "The "Pariah" Syndrome: The Complexities of the Iranian Predicament," Iran at the Crossroads, Miron Rezun ed., (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1990), pp. 17-18.



neutral in this war, the GCC actually supported Iraq against us. Ultimately, this support allowed Iraq to persevere in the war.

Simultaneously we isolated ourselves from the world. The radical policy was to be self sufficient.\* We neglected diplomatic relations with many countries." We felt that trust in Islam could overcome our military shortcomings."" This isolation eventually costs us the war.

The policies of isolation and intervention were radical policies. The radicals controlling our government were blamed for the outcome of the war. In addition, the citizens were tired of the radical policies and voted the radicals out of power."" As a result, the radicals became the minority and the moderates or pragmatists under President Rafsanjani became the controlling majority.

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\* "...Iran's leaders really believed that they could demonstrate the validity of the revolution and affirm its message by confronting and overcoming adversity through self reliance...[As a result,] Iran fought the war with both hands tied; without dependable or rich allies, without access to weapons systems compatible with those in its inventory, and without the benefit of its own best-trained minds." Chubin, p. 134.

" Until 1990 Iran had little diplomacy with any Arab states other than Libya, Algeria, and Syria. Rezun, p. 20.

"" "...the faith of the Islamic troops is stronger than the Iraq's superior firepower." Chubin, p. 134.

"" The major casualty of the war has been the credibility of the Islamic Republic among its own rank and file. There was high inflation, high unemployment, rampant corruption, shortages of food, fuel and electricity, and the war was stalemated. Chubin, p. 143.

To reconstruct our nation, our foreign policy changed from intervention and isolationism to a policy of engagement.<sup>21</sup> We tried to make our Revolution look less threatening by moderating our criticism of other countries. Our moderates sought outside support, especially economic support, for our reconstruction. We started to make overtures to other nations to resume diplomatic relations.

Gulf War. The Gulf war was a tremendous opportunity for us. Our archenemy, Iraq, was beaten although not broken. Iraq was no longer the dominant regional power. We used this opportunity to resume diplomatic relations with the Gulf and European states. Finally, at the end of the Gulf war we presented a plan to reassert ourselves as the regional power, but we were rebuffed by the Gulf states.

The Gulf War dramatically improved our opportunity to regain our position as the dominant regional power.\* Iraq was seen by the Arab states as an expansionist power, and we are the only indigenous regional power that can check Iraq's ambitions.

This war gave us an opportunity to show our new moderate foreign policy. We did not oppose any of the United Nation's

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\* "After its defeat in the Iran-Iraq War, Iran seemed destined to a long period of insubordination to a resurgent Iraq. The Gulf War changed all that, however. Iraq's destruction hastened by at least five years Iran's return to a position of natural dominance in the Gulf and as the natural counterbalance to any Iraqi bid for hegemony." Fuller, p. 35.

Resolutions against Iraq. Iraq, in an attempt to gain our support, returned all of our territory gained in the Eight-year war. We remained neutral in the war. This neutrality allowed us to improve our relations with the Arab states and Europe. As a direct result of the war, we resumed relations with all of the Gulf and European states.

After the war was over, we tried to reassert our role as a regional power in the Gulf. We opposed any dismemberment of Iraq. A breakup of Iraq would surely result in a civil war because of Iraq's different ethnic groups. This war would also have a detrimental impact on our country.' We wanted to form a security organization with the Gulf states to contain Iraq. We would provide the leadership for the organization. Despite our efforts, we did not succeed. The Gulf states rebuffed our attempt and turned to the Western powers for their security."

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\* If Iraq disintegrated into a civil war, the different ethnic groups would seek outside intervention to help their cause. During the war Iran restrained Ayatollah Hakim, the Iraqi Sh'ia leader to the Islamic Revolution of Iraq (SAIRI) in exile in Iran, from calling for an Islamic overthrow of the Iraqi government. After the war, Iran supported the Sh'ia uprising, but help was minimal. For example, Iran did not send troops. Shaul Bakhash, "Iranian Politics Since the Gulf War," The Politics of Change in the Middle East, Robert B. Satloff, ed., (Washington: Westview Press, 1993), p. 65.

" If Iran could eliminate the Western powers, these smaller nations would have to come to terms with Iran. Peace requires a smaller armament requirement. IBID, pp. 68-69.

Breakup of the Soviet Union. The disintegration of the Soviet Union has created six independent republics in Central Asia: Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kirgizia, and Azerbaijan. We have always had interests in Central Asia.\* Tsarist Russia and the Soviet Union prevented us from maintaining our influence in this Region. The breakup of the Soviet Union has created both new dangers for us and new opportunities to regain and expand our influence.

These Central Asian republics are looking for a model to replace their Communist governments. Competition between these models is mostly economic. Russia offers the status quo. It is still their largest trading partner. Turkey offers a secular model of government. Turkey is expanding its trade in the region and it emphasizes its extensive ties to Europe. We offer an Islamic model of government. Unfortunately, Islam was almost destroyed by the Soviets in these republics. However, we are in the best geographical location to support the new republics with access to the sea for exports.<sup>22</sup> Control over these trade routes gives us some influence.

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\* Central Asia was under Persian culture and civilization for nearly three millennia. Iran has not forgotten this historical role. Fuller, p. 137. Before the discovery of oil, Iran's primary interests were in Central Asia. Clawson, p. 80.

Central Asia's instability is a danger to us. The primary danger is the emergence of a new power balance in Central Asia that threatens our national security.' Russia is the biggest threat because it has recently tried to reassert its authority over these republics. In addition, it has shown the will to use military force to protect its interests. Despite Russia's efforts these republics may align themselves with different regional powers." We prefer the Republics remain fragmented or align themselves with other powers than Russia. This gives us better access to the Republics when compared to having the Republics dominated by Russia.

Arab - Israeli Peace Negotiations. We bitterly oppose the Arab Israeli peace movement."" Our greatest ally, Syria,

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\* There are four major players in the power balance; Russia, Iran, Turkey, or one of the new republics, specifically, Kazakhstan or Uzbekistan.

" Kazakhstan and Kirgizia will move towards China. Tajikistan will move toward Iran. Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan will move toward Turkey. Anthony Hyman, "Moving Out of Moscow's Orbit: The Outlook for Central Asia," International Affairs, 69, 2 (1993), p. 290.

"" This is an excellent example of the role of internal politics on foreign policy. The radicals bitterly oppose any peace agreement. The moderates realize that Israel will continue to exist despite Iran's wishes. Therefore, there are some conditions that might make Iran acquiesce to an agreement. For example, if control of the Islamic Holy Places in East Jerusalem were resolved, the radicals would lose some support for their opposition.

may become dependent on a Western security guarantee.\* It appears that any peace agreement will involve security guarantees and possibly military forces as peacekeepers from the United States." With this increased involvement, the United States will attempt to increase its influence in regional affairs. If there is peace between the Arabs and Israel, Western influence may become even more entrenched in the Region.

Conclusion. As shown so far, we are inundated with conflict both inside and outside our borders. We live in a very dynamic region of the world where regional events have changed the balance of power. This instability will continue. We have made several internal and external changes that position us to maintain our regional position. However, we are still an unsatisfied power, frustrated by not having the influence and weight that our stature merits.<sup>23</sup>

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\* Syria will require some sort of guarantee that Israel will not attack Syria. Like the Camp David accords, this guarantee will probably come from the United States. Ambassador Eilts, "The Middle East," Lecture, U.S. Naval War College, Newport, RI: 20 January 1994.

" The region trusts peacekeepers from the United States much more than peacekeepers from the United Nations. precedence for this has been set with the United States peacekeepers in the Sinai. Eilts.

## CHAPTER III

### VULNERABILITIES

We can draw some conclusions from the first two chapters. First and foremost, despite these foreign conflicts and domestic pressures, we survive as a culture and a nation. However, we have internal and external vulnerabilities that affect our domestic policies and foreign affairs. Our vulnerabilities include a fear of foreigners in internal affairs, separatist movements, Islamic differences, internal politics, and economics.

Fear of Foreigners in Internal Affairs. We eliminated foreign influence inside Iran during our Islamic revolution. We want to remain free of foreign influence and are very alert to any outside intervention with our different ethnic groups and dissidents. Therefore, we distrust any foreign involvement in regional ethnic disputes. We are also very suspicious of Iranian dissidents living abroad, especially when they seek foreign intervention to overthrow our government. These dissidents are a direct threat to our security; yet, any special operations to eliminate this threat are a liability for our moderate foreign policy.

This fear also makes it difficult for us to form alliances. We do not have any natural friends; therefore, our alliances are based on our requirements for each situation.

This means alliances can shift dramatically depending on the situation. In addition, we do not trust our allies motives; therefore, we are very suspicious of any security guarantees and will not rely on an ally for our survival.'

Separatist Movements. When we are attacked, our ethnic groups are not a vulnerability. However, we are vulnerable to internal separatist movements. These separatist movements need outside support. This support could come from power struggles among the ruling elite, but it is more likely to come from a foreign power who wants influence in our affairs. Therefore, any ethnic group on our border that has separatist ambitions is a natural source of instability for both nations.

Two of our different ethnic groups, Kurds and Azeris, have had separatist movements. Iraq encouraged our Kurds to rebel against us in the Eight-year war. This attempt to start a separatist movement failed because our Kurds distrust Iraq more than us. The Kurds want us and the other states to cede population and territory to form the new state, Kurdistan.<sup>24</sup> The United Nations no-fly zone in Iraq has created a de facto Kurdish state in Iraq. This means our Kurds think they should have more autonomy. However, we will never cede land or population for a Kurdish homeland.

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\* For example, if Iran and Iraq formed an alliance, Iran would not trust Iraq to protect Iran.



In 1988, increased tensions between Armenia and Azerbaijan over the region of Nagorno Karabakh stimulated Azeri nationalism. The breakup of the Soviet Union has turned those tensions between Armenia and Azerbaijan into war. The President of Azerbaijan has referred to our community of Azeris as southern Azerbaijan.<sup>25</sup> We want our Azeris to remain part of Iran and we are using all of the tools of statecraft to keep them.

Islamic Differences. The differences between Shiites and Sunnis are an external liability. Every time we try to exert our control, the religious rift complicates the problem. This can be overcome; however, it is always a factor in our foreign policy. We have a responsibility to support all Shiite communities including those in other countries.' Sometimes, this support destabilizes those countries."

Internal Politics. The policies of our government are very difficult to predict because our policies reflect a

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\* Some of this support may be outside official channels. Shiite clergy receive money directly from the Iranian people and the clergy may use this money to support Shiite communities outside Iran without approval from the Iranian government.

" "Iran under any regime cannot remain indifferent to the opportunities to extend at least moral support, if not more, to Shiite communities seeking to strengthen their communal position or even come to power....No successor Iranian regime of whatever political stripe is likely to want to deprive itself of this ready-made pretext to assert Iranian interests in the Gulf - especially to refrain from exploiting the already existing fifth column." Fuller, p. 51.

compromise between the radicals and moderates. President Rafsanjani has to balance and compromise with these groups to implement government policies. There are continually shifting coalitions between all three political groups depending on the issue. It is very difficult to predict which group holds the upper hand on any particular issue. Therefore, our policies are actually an amalgam of different views.<sup>26</sup>

Economic Strength. An increase in oil production is the fastest way for us to raise capital. During the Eight-year war, Iraq tried to destroy our oil industry. We repaired our oil facilities; however, the decrease in oil prices has affected planned revenues.\* Due to the Persian Gulf war, some of the Gulf Arab states, especially Saudi Arabia, incurred debts above and beyond normal expenditures. This means they need to pump more oil to pay these debts.\*\* This has forced us to pump more oil to receive the same amount of revenues.\*\*\* The failure of OPEC to set the price of oil and production

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\* Oil accounts for approximately 90% of Iran's exports. Iran expected oil prices to rise from \$14.2 dollars in 1988 to \$21.4 dollars in 1993. Hooshang Amirahmadi, "Iranian Economic Reconstruction Plan and Prospects for its Success," Reconstruction and Regional Diplomacy in the Persian Gulf Hoosang Amirahmadi and Nadar Entessar ed., (London: Routledge, 1992), p. 123.

\*\* The Gulf states financed a large portion of the Gulf war. To pay this debt, all the Gulf states are overproducing which has created an oil glut.

\*\*\* Iran increased its oil output from 2.5 million barrels per day in 1988 to 3.2 million barrels per day in 1992. Pipes, p. 125.

quotas is a direct threat to our future. Lower oil prices mean less revenues which mean lower or less reconstruction. This means President Rafsanjani may not be able to deliver the promised improvements, which affects our internal politics.

Conclusion. We must protect ourselves as a Regional power. Our domestic problems and our foreign policy cannot be separated. The continuous conflict, both domestic and foreign, shapes our policies. We will continue to place great importance on the role of diplomacy, statecraft, and military power. We will take any measures necessary to protect ourselves from any foreign intervention or influence. The multiethnic nature of our country offers us a continuing challenge, but we have been successful in holding our nation together. We will continue to support Shiism throughout the world despite the perception that we are interfering in other countries' internal affairs. Our internal politics will continue to be fractured and contentious between the radicals and the moderates. Finally, we need to generate more oil revenues to improve economic conditions.

## PART II

### POLITICAL AIMS

We have a long and glorious history. We are a large nation with tremendous resources, a large population, a geostrategic position; yet, we are frustrated in our attempts to become the power our position deserves. We have four political aims. We want to maintain our Islamic Revolution, defend our country, be the leader in Persian Gulf security, and be the leader in Central Asian economics.

We are often accused of working to create an Islamic or Persian empire. Although we did try to create an Islamic empire immediately after our Revolution, this goal was unattainable. Now we are focused on maintaining our Islamic Revolution. We are not territorially ambitious; therefore, we are not trying to create a Persian empire. However, we do have legitimate border claims, especially in the Gulf region. We want to be recognized as a dominant regional power. We want to be the leader of Persian Gulf security, have influence with Iraq and the Transcaucasus, be an economic leader in Central Asia, and have influence with Afghanistan.

## CHAPTER IV

### EMPIRES AS A POLITICAL AIM?

Our political aims are closely tied to our internal politics. Each of the different groups in the government has different goals. Immediately following the Revolution, the radical group controlled the government and our goal was to form an Islamic empire. However, the Gulf war dashed this goal. By 1988 the radicals were displaced by the moderates. The moderates do not believe in militant Islamic action; however, they are more susceptible to a goal of Persian nationalism, or a Persian empire.<sup>27</sup> We have not succumbed to this idealism. We are not trying to build an Islamic or Persian empire.

Islamic Empire. At the beginning of our Revolution, Ayatollah Khomeini did envision an Islamic empire. He saw himself as the leader of a worldwide revolutionary movement. He declaimed "O Muslim nations of the world who are oppressed, arise!"<sup>28</sup> The Arab states were alarmed because Ayatollah Khomeini claimed to be the leader of all the Moslems, not just the Shiites.<sup>29</sup> These views continued until 1988, when we had to accept a cease fire to end the Eight-year war. This loss questioned the validity of our Revolution and we realized we

could not create an Islamic empire.' To build an Islamic empire, we would have to overcome existing Islamic differences that exist for each nation. We want to see the people of Islam unite, but Islam needs to organize under one governing body. The concept of an Islamic empire is blocked by four factors: the internal divisions within Islam, political factors, social policies, and economic policies.<sup>30</sup>

The first obstacle is the divisions of Islam. To form an Islamic empire, not only will Shiites have to unite with other Shiites, Shiites must unite with Sunni. However, the divisions between Sunni and Shiite are deep. Despite Khomeini's call for an Iraqi Shiite uprising to support us in the Eight-year war, the Iraqi Shiites were a determined enemy against us. Islam, by itself, was unable to unify the Shiites.<sup>31</sup> As guardians of Shiism, we will not allow ourselves to be incorporated into an international Sunni organization. Similarly, the Sunnis are not going to allow Shiites to assume the leadership role in the creation of an Islamic empire."

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\* If the Revolution was valid, Iran would have won the war. When Iran was unable to continue, the legitimacy of the Revolution was questioned, especially outside Iran.

" Islam is very important but every state has their own version of Islam based on their culture. Religion is not the basis for the world order. Hence, the Islamic organizations are represented by states, not Islam. The religious centers at Mecca and Medina have not been a focus for Islamic action. While these areas are central to the Islamic religion and the pilgrimage a pillar of the Islamic faith, the shrines are not the central rallying point for the Islamic faith. This is (continued...)

Politically, an Islamic empire would be very difficult to form because Islam would have to overcome nationalism. Every nation has its own type of Islam that has been shaped by its cultural past. Therefore, each nation has a different interpretation of Islam that is unique to their country.' A true Islamic empire has no separation between religion and state. Therefore, an Islamic empire would have to overcome all political, ethnic, social, and economic differences that exist between the different Islamic states. For example, during the Eight-year war a sense of nationalism kept the Iraqis and Iranians apart when Islam should have united the Iranian and Iraqi Shiites. Therefore, nationalism is currently stronger than Islam. To form an Islamic empire, Islam must conquer nationalism.

Social standards also have an impact on the formation of an Islamic empire. The differences in the social standards of Islam between each nation, which is based on an interpretation of the Koran, create strain. The progressive states do not want to return to the strict fundamentalists' interpretation of the Koran. For example, the United Arab Emirates does not want the same social practice of Islam that exists in Iran.

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"(...continued)  
because the religion is between a person and God and does not rely on shrines. Iran has also shown that a religious regime can be as repressive as a secular regime.

' "It is difficult to visualize the emergence of a large scale united Islamic revolutionary movement that transcends national boundaries." Diller, p. 135.

An Islamic empire dominated by our Islamic Republic would have to enforce the same social standards for all incorporated nations.'

Variations in economic conditions also prevent the creation of an Islamic empire. Despite our best efforts, our Islamic Revolution has not succeeded in alleviating pressing economic needs. Those states that have money and have extensive ties to the West do not want to return to a simplistic form of Islamic life. They want to practice Islam without the repressive regression of Islamic fundamentalism.

Although we want to protect our Islamic Revolution, we are no longer trying to create an Islamic empire. We will continue to support Islamic movements; however, we understand that Islam is not yet a unifying force that can overcome nationalism. We will continue to support Shiite communities around the world, but this should not be construed as an attempt to create an Islamic empire.

Persian Nationalism. We do not want to recreate a Persian empire. Ayatollah Khomeini felt that Persian nationalism was incompatible with Islam and the unity of believers. To recreate the empire means we must expand our

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\* "The modern experiences of Iran and Saudi Arabia demonstrate that although religious considerations can play a supportive or catalytic role in politics, turmoil is more likely to derive from unfulfilled political and social expectations, lack of participation in the government, and the absence of social justice." Diller, p. 135.



territory. Territorial expansion requires us to convince other nations to subordinate themselves to us or requires the use of military force to expand into other countries. No nation in our region is going to willingly subordinate themselves to us, and we do not have the military capability to expand out to the old Persian borders.

Historically, Iran was not the center of the Persian empire. The center of the empire was based in Afghanistan and Central Asia.<sup>32</sup> The first step would be to reunite the Persian people by invading western Afghanistan and Tajikistan.<sup>33</sup> Afghanistan, in its weak state, could be invaded now. It is in the midst of a civil war, and fighting is concentrated in power struggles among competing warlords. Most of the other regional powers, such as Pakistan, have given up in Afghanistan. We could attack with relative impunity. However, we have not attacked Afghanistan because we do not want territory.

Some will raise a counter argument that we are interested in territory. We have been accused of attacks on Abu Musa and the Tunb Islands. However, these are legitimate border disputes. Western powers drew the boundaries of the Middle East. These boundaries often split ethnic groups and were designed to support Western interests. These border disputes must not be confused with territorial expansion to create a Persian empire. Our existing border disputes include Abu Musa

and the Tunb Islands, Bahrain, the Shatt-al-Arab waterway, and the demarcation lines in the Persian Gulf.<sup>34</sup>

Therefore, we are not recreating the Persian empire. We have made no moves to reunite the Persian people. We have no territorial ambitions; however, we do have legitimate border disputes that must be resolved. These border disputes must not be confused with territorial ambitions.

## CHAPTER V

### DOMINANT REGIONAL POWER

Our political goal is to regain our position as the dominant power in the Region.\* We are a Regional power with a large population and tremendous resources. Our economy has a growing GNP, our standard of living is rising, and we are developing our own industrial capability. We have a significant military capability when compared to other states in the region. Because of our geostrategic position, we are connected to the Middle East, Central Asia, and Southeast Asia. We want a sphere of influence that includes Iraq, the Transcaucasus, Central Asia, Afghanistan, and the Persian Gulf.<sup>35</sup> However, we are frustrated in our attempt to become the dominant Regional power by Western influence and other Regional powers.

Under the Nixon doctrine the United States recognized us as the regional power. After our Islamic Revolution, we eliminated foreign influence from our internal politics. Now the United States does not want us to exercise our role as a regional power. Since the Gulf War, the United States has become more involved in regional affairs, which prevents us from exercising our traditional role. We also compete with other regional powers like Saudi Arabia and Iraq who got their

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\* See figure 4.

power from the West.' Without this outside influence, we are the natural geostrategic power in the region. If we can eliminate the outside involvement in our sphere of influence, we will again be recognized as the regional leader, and we will have tremendous influence over regional security and world affairs.

Persian Gulf Security. The discovery of oil has made control of the Gulf very important to the world economy. Anyone that can control either the supply or transportation of oil has political and economic power. We are the natural protectors of the Gulf. We are the largest country bordering the Persian Gulf. In addition, we have the longest shoreline and dominate the Strait of Hormuz. When the British withdrew from the Gulf, we filled their role, with the approval of the United States, because of our geostrategic position.<sup>36</sup> Since then, this role has been filled by the GCC, Iraq, and the United States respectively. The importance of oil to the Western economies has kept the Western powers involved in regional affairs.

Gulf security is a classic problem between the small and the large states. The small states, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, UAE, and Oman, are all oil producing states. Saudi Arabia and Iraq are the two indigenous regional powers that compete with

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\* Saudi Arabia was built up by the West. Iraq gained strength during the Eight-year war with assistance from the United States and the GCC.

us in the Gulf. The small states have serious security concerns -- they cannot defend themselves or their oil exports against regional threats without outside help. As a result, Gulf security has shown an interesting trend.'

Almost no common denominator exists. Even the goal of keeping major external powers out of the Gulf is only in the interest of the three largest states (Iran, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia) - and not all of the time . . . The smaller states will regularly welcome outside powers when they can provide protection from concrete and specific threats from hegemonic Gulf powers.<sup>37</sup>

Whoever protects the flow of oil from the small states will have some cumulative influence over the region."

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' The last twenty years of security policies in the Gulf illustrate these dynamics. Radical Arab states wanted to keep the Gulf secure from Western influence. Under the Shah, we wanted to keep the Gulf secure from radical Arab and Soviet influence. The smaller Gulf states want security from us, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia. We wanted to keep the Gulf secure from the two superpowers, Western influence, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia. Iraq wanted to keep the Gulf secure from Iran, Israel, European, and U.S. influence. The West wants to protect the Gulf from Soviet influence, Islamic fundamentalism, Iranian expansionism, and Iraqi expansionism. Fuller, p. 83.

" Small states use the following principles when facing realities of larger states' ambitions: avoid international controversy and to remain neutral in disputes between the larger powers. This makes the threat of these small states to the large states very small. When pressed for a position, small states will vote with the dominant power especially if it has no impact on their state. When the pressure is overwhelming, the small states have used four different options. First, they capitulate to the larger state before force is used. This is normally an attempt by the ruling party to stay in power. Second, but far more dangerous is to play the powers against each other. The third option, which is much more likely for these rich states, is an attempt to buy off their enemies. The final solution is to turn to a great power to save the state from imminent danger. Fuller, p. 87.

In 1981 the Persian Gulf Arab states formed the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) as a security organization for the Persian Gulf. The GCC formed as a direct result of fears of escalation from the Eight-year war. We were excluded from the GCC. Iraq was also excluded; however, the GCC violated their neutrality by providing support to Iraq. With this GCC support, Iraq continued to grow stronger as we grew weaker. This outside support to Iraq is one of the most significant causes of the cease fire in 1988 under UN Security Council Resolution 598.

This outside support to Iraq backfired on the GCC. They built up Iraq to be the dominant regional power. However, Iraq's true intentions for the future of the region became obvious to the GCC when Iraq invaded Kuwait, a GCC member. Saudi Arabia is the only Gulf regional power in the GCC; therefore, they are the leader of the GCC. However, the GCC failed as a security organization when Iraq invaded Kuwait. The GCC was not strong enough to fight Iraq and neither were we. This brought the United States into the region with overwhelming combat power. Since the Gulf war the GCC members turned to the West, under the leadership of the United States, for security. Since the GCC states recognize the United States as the protector of Gulf security, we are unable to exercise our regional role.

We have to compete with Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and the Western powers for the Gulf security role. If the United

States could be forced from the Gulf, the small states would have to turn to one of the three indigenous powers for protection. Iraq is willing to take this role but they are expansionists; therefore, the small states do not trust Iraq. Saudi Arabia traditionally relies on economic rather than military power.\* Therefore, we are the only power that can protect the GCC from the other two regional powers; however, they also distrust us.

Relations with Iraq. We have still not resumed full diplomatic relations with Iraq. For the near term, Iraq is our most dangerous potential enemy. None of the underlying causes of the Eight-year war have been resolved.\*\* Iraq challenges our interests in the Persian Gulf.

Despite Iraq's previous belligerency, relations between us have improved. We accepted Iraq's offer to withdrawal from our territory in return for our neutrality in the Gulf War. We understand that Iraq was only trying to reduce the threat on their eastern border. Our neutrality showed the moderation

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\* Saudi Arabia's population is too small when compared to Iran and Iraq to become the dominant regional power.

\*\* The proximate cause of the war was sovereignty over the Shatt-al Arab waterway. Underlying causes were that each was trying to overthrow the other, and Iraq wanted to be the regional power. Nozar Alaolmolki, Struggle for Dominance in the Persian Gulf: Past, Present, and Future Prospects, American University Studies, Series X, Political Science, V31 (New York: Peter Lang, 1991), p. 239.

in our foreign policy.' After the Gulf war, our relations continue to improve; however, we will never trust Iraq." We know that once the trade embargo against Iraq is lifted, Iraq will try to become the dominant regional power."

Therefore, we need to be strong enough to protect both ourselves and our potential Gulf security partners.

Despite the political chasm that separates us from Iraq, we have two common political goals. First, both of us want to eliminate outside intervention in the Gulf. However, if Western influence is eliminated, our common interests will quickly dissolve into a struggle for regional domination.

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\* Iran did not want Iraq totally destroyed or they would have joined the coalition. Iran, by remaining neutral, wanted to stay out of the conflict and act as the mediators when required. This is the leadership role that Iran covets.

" Recent policies toward Iraq demonstrate Iran's attempts to improve relations and protect their Revolution. In March 1993 Iran shipped oil to Iraq despite the embargo. Diplomatic relations were improving after the Gulf war until the Iranian airstrike on the People's Mujahdeen of Iran (PMOI) inside Iraq on 25 May, 1992. This action was in response to PMOI bombings inside Iran prior to the 11 June elections. In early 1993, Iran attacked the rebel Iranian Kurds in Iraq. Despite these raids, Iran and Iraq held talks to discuss outstanding Iran -- Iraq war issues on October 18-19, 1993. Kenneth Katzman, Iran and Iraq: U.S. National Security Problems Since the Gulf War -- A Chronology, Congressional Research Service, 8 July 1993.

" Iran is also threatened by Iraq's oil policy. Before the embargo, Iraq was pumping as much oil as possible to buy arms, which further depressed the price of oil. Iran wants the embargo to continue indefinitely. Once the embargo lifts, Iraq will sell their oil at any price and continue to build their military power. A further drop in the price of oil threatens Iran's ability to build a credible military force to deter Iraqi aggression.



Second, we also share common ground on the Kurds. Neither of us wants the Kurds to have their own nation.\*

Relations with Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia is a regional economic power. Saudi Arabia has the largest oil reserves and oil production capacity in the Middle East; therefore, Saudi Arabia has to be included in any economic cooperation agreement for oil. During the Eight-year war Saudi Arabia had a chance to become the dominant regional power, but did not.<sup>38</sup> Saudi Arabia, as the leader of the GCC, was unable to check Iraqi expansion without outside help.

We characterize Saudi Arabia's foreign policy as defensive." Saudi Arabia normally uses economic power to influence her enemies, not force. Therefore, our biggest threat from Saudi Arabia is economic. With such vast oil reserves, Saudi Arabia can overproduce to drive the price of oil even lower. This affects our projected revenues, which can destabilize our internal politics. With such power, Saudi Arabia will always be a leader in OPEC. However, OPEC has been unable to enforce production quotas to regain control

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\* The United Nations is encouraging the creation of a Kurdish state by providing security for the Iraqi Kurds from the Iraqi forces.

" Many of the small states on the Arabian peninsula fear Saudi Arabia; however, the small states can turn to one of the other regional powers to check any Saudi intentions. In addition, Oman's long term enemy has been Saudi Arabia. "If Iran and Saudi Arabia are on a longer term collision course in the Gulf, then Oman most likely would find itself an ally of Iran on an anti-Saudi basis." Fuller, p. 82.

over the price of oil, which lessens Saudi Arabia's influence.\*

Another threat for us is a revolutionary change of government in Saudi Arabia, which could have grave repercussions for our future goals. We would be very concerned because every overthrow of an Arab monarchy has brought radicalism in its wake.<sup>39</sup> Since Saudi Arabia has the Holy places of Islam, Sunni radicalism could strain relations between the Sunni and the Shiite. In addition, radicalism could change Saudi Arabia from a defensive to an expansionist state. An expansionist Saudi Arabia would attempt to force the smaller Gulf states to align themselves with Saudi Arabia. With its tremendous economic power and advanced weaponry, Saudi Arabia could directly challenge us for the leadership in Gulf security.

Central Asia and Azerbaijan. Competition in this region is primarily economic. We have religious, cultural, and historical ties to the Region.<sup>40</sup> During its rule, the Soviet empire limited our access to these republics by preventing us from establishing religious, cultural and economic ties. We are in direct competition with Turkey and Russia for influence in these republics.

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\* Saudi Arabia can always overproduce to drive the price of oil down; however, oil prices have dropped so far that this threat has lost some of its impact. In addition, Saudi Arabia has serious short term debt problems.

Russia remains the largest trading partner of the republics. Trading with Russia is convenient; yet, the Russians do not have hard currency and often pay in rubles. To free themselves of Russian influence, the republics must develop outside markets. Russia and Iran offer the only trade routes from Central Asia to the West. If the republics are trying to free themselves from Russian influence, they must turn to us for trade routes. Establishing their trade routes could give us influence in these Central Asian republics.

Turkey has a stronger economy and better ties to Europe than we do. They have tried to emphasize the Turkish culture in these Central Asian republics. This has not been very successful for two reasons. First, the republics do not want Turkey to replace the Soviet Union as their master. Second, despite Turkey's efforts to gain influence with economic aid and trade, they are in a terrible geographic position. All overland trade between the Central Asian republics and Turkey must pass through Russia, Azerbaijan, or Iran.

We have the most to offer to the new Central Asian republics. President Rafsanjani summed up our advantage when he said,

We can open roads for them and we can link them to the foreign world. This is a vital and important interest for them. We are now implementing this project which involves sea, land, and air routes as well as railroads. This is in addition to communications. We can also supply them with supplies and consumer goods. Iran can give much and, therefore, Iran must be a means for these supplies to get to these republics. We can also purchase from them at world prices all the goods

that they are compelled to sell to Russia at very low prices. These goods include cotton, meat, gas, oil, and many other items.<sup>41</sup>

Russia is the biggest threat to our northern economic ambitions. However, we must not alienate Russia. Russia has been willing to sell us arms for our national defense and we cannot jeopardize this source. We must focus on economic cooperation and diplomacy with the Central Asian Republics. In February 1992 we expanded the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) to include the Central Asian Republics. We want to be the leader of the ECO. In October 1993 President Rafsanjani visited all Central Asian states except Tajikistan. A policy of engagement is required to encourage the republics to develop trade routes through our country.

As with every opportunity there is some risk. The problems in Central Asia are vast. Both Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan can also compete for power in Central Asia.<sup>42</sup> Foreign involvement in the ethnic, regional, religious, and inter-elite conflict adds further instability. There is war in Tajikistan and Azerbaijan. Russia has sent peacekeepers to Tajikistan. The war between Azerbaijan and Armenia has attracted outside influence from Russia, Turkey, and the United States. We do not expect to have stability on our northern frontier for several years.<sup>43</sup>

Relations with Turkey. President Rafsanjani has improved our relations with Turkey. Turkey is our primary overland

route to Europe and offers ties to the West. In September 1992 we signed border agreements to curb support for opposition groups. On October 18, 1993 we strengthened the agreement to stop drug smuggling.

Despite the improvements in our relations, two sources of friction still exist between us. The Kurds have been a constant source of tension.\* At one time, Turkey openly considered an invasion of Iran to contain the possibility of Kurdish separatism.<sup>44</sup> Turkey is also threatening our interests in Azerbaijan and Central Asia.<sup>45</sup> They need to dominate Azerbaijan for overland access to Central Asia. We resent the interference by Turkey and the United States in an ethnic dispute for future economic gain. Our competition with Turkey for influence in Central Asia will continue.

Our Eastern Frontier. Our eastern frontier borders both Afghanistan and Pakistan. We are very interested in the future of Afghanistan because it is our link to part of Central Asia and the Far East. Afghanistan is embroiled in a civil war which could spill over our border.<sup>46</sup> The war has degenerated into a power struggle between rival factions. The country is controlled by warlords and the factional fighting could continue for another decade. Both Pakistan and the United Nations mediators have given up.<sup>47</sup>

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\* For example Iran was suspected by Turkey of supporting the terrorist Kurdish Workers Party (PKK). Turkey has allegedly harbored the PMOI.

Our current policy toward Afghanistan is disjointed. Our policy has been plagued with infighting since April 1982. Differences over our approach are closely tied to the moderate and radical divisions within Iran.\*

Our relations with Pakistan are very good. We have a stable border because of Pakistan's problems with India. Pakistan cannot afford to have problems on both borders. We feel Pakistan will continue to take "exceptional efforts" to maintain our good relations.<sup>48</sup> Pakistan wants us to join in an alliance to give Pakistan strategic depth." However, we have been very cool to this idea because it may drag us into Pakistan's conflict with India.

Conclusion. We want to regain our position as the dominant regional power. In the Nixon doctrine, we were recognized as a regional power and the United States allowed us to exert our influence. Since our Islamic Revolution, we have not been allowed to continue in our traditional role as a leader in the region. Before we could consolidate the gains of the Revolution, we were attacked by Iraq and all of our energy was focused on the Eight-year war.

After the revolution, we had a period of isolationism and interventionism. Since many nations distrusted the Islamic

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\* The radicals want to support the Islamic factions. The moderates want to support an end to the fighting.

\*\* The Pakistan Chief of Staff, General Aslam Beg proposed this alliance.

revolution, we were isolated from the world. In addition we isolated ourselves from the outside world to consolidate the Revolution. Simultaneously, we intervened in other countries in an attempt to spread the Islamic Revolution. Our loss in the Eight-year war forced us to reassess our policies. We recognize that we cannot be a dominant regional power without rejoining the world community.

Ayatollah Khomeini gave his approval for us to begin a policy of engagement. The Gulf war gave us a perfect opportunity to show the world our new policy. We used our influence to gain the release of the Western hostages. We stayed neutral for the Gulf war. We resumed relations with our neighbors and Europe.

For the next ten years, we will continue to strive for regional leadership using a policy of engagement. The impact of our domestic politics will continue to be felt in our foreign affairs. The moderates and conservatives will follow the current policy of engagement; the radicals will continue to export the Islamic revolution. However, the radicals will operate on the fringe of Iran's true regional interest. We will continue to support Shiite minorities because that undergirds the legitimacy of our government; however, support will be tempered against larger interests. We will work hard to make our Islamic regime less threatening and more

attractive to the region. Our future policies will remain focused on regaining our position as the dominant regional power.\*

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\* "Future Iranian policies are likely to remain highly nationalistic, anti-Western in instinct, nonaligned by preference, and in support of Iranian regional hegemony." Fuller, p. 268.



## PART III

### MILITARY CAPABILITIES

The primary mission of our military is the defense of our position as a major power in the Persian Gulf. Our security interests extend past our immediate borders and include the entire Gulf Region. Our military capabilities, however, are limited by several factors: combat losses from our war with Iraq; difficulty obtaining modern weapons and technology; Western interference in Regional security; and extensive border areas in a very unstable Region. In addition, the low price of oil limits the amount of money we can spend on our military.

The success of our defense, therefore, depends on our ability to set priorities for modernization as we execute an overhaul of our entire military structure.<sup>49</sup> We are developing weapons of mass destruction (WMD) to provide Regional deterrence as we rebuild a conventional force equipped to meet our national security challenges in the 21st Century.

## CHAPTER VI

### LESSONS LEARNED FROM RECENT REGIONAL WARS

Two recent Regional wars have affected our military capabilities. The Eight-year war with Iraq severely damaged our weapons inventory. At the same time, we learned some hard lessons that have shaped our rebuilding focus. The subsequent Gulf War provided further insight into modern warfare in our Region.

#### Lessons Learned from the Eight-year War (1980 to 1988).

The Eight-year war with Iraq started shortly after our Islamic revolution. Although it began as a border dispute, it grew to encompass the use of strategic bombing and chemical weapons. The ground war developed into a pitched battle without decisive military success by either side. A critical review of the war reveals the following important lessons:

#### **Unify the Military Command Structure!**

During the Eight-year War we formed a separate military structure called the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) or Rev Guard.\* The Rev Guard was in a constant power struggle

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\* Immediately following the revolution, the radicals created the Rev Guard to protect the aims of the Islamic revolution from the remnants of the defeated regime. When Iraq invaded Iran in 1980, the fundamentalist leaders did not trust the "Shah's" regular Army and expanded the Rev Guard military structure to include units with missions parallel to the regular forces, causing a power struggle within the military. While the

with the regular forces. The power to execute and control military campaigns shifted between the regular forces and the Rev Guard throughout the course of the war. Our creation of "dual chains of command" destroyed our military effectiveness and was a major reason for the loss of the Eight-year war.

#### **Modernize and Increase Combat Readiness!**

Under Rev Guard control, we formed the "Basiij," a reservist force made up of young religious zealots. The Rev Guard used the Basiij in "human waves" against Iraqi armored defenses. Although the Basiij exhibited courage and determination, their lack of training and antiquated weaponry made them ineffective against Iraq's more modern Army. The huge losses during the human wave campaigns emphasized our need to modernize our military and increase combat readiness.

#### **Focus on Air Defense!**

The Iraqi Air Force moved unimpeded through our air space. Iraqi Mirage aircraft bombed much of our infrastructure, destroying oil refineries and population centers. Our inability to counter this threat has emphasized our need for a modern air defense system.

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Rev Guard held the trust of the revolutionary leaders, the regular forces were not trusted and were restrained by the government. Iranian leaders confined the regular army to defense while the Rev Guard conducted most of the offensive campaigns. This conflict diminished military combat effectiveness and is blamed for the loss of the Eight-year War.

### **Obtain Production Lines!**

Our military weapons inventory, having undergone a dramatic buildup during the Shah's reign, suffered huge losses during the Eight-year War. During the conflict, Iraq destroyed 60% of our major military combat systems to include tanks, armored vehicles, artillery and aircraft.<sup>50</sup> No longer supplied from the West, our need to replace combat systems and ammunition taught us the importance of obtaining our own production capabilities.

### **Train in NBC Warfare!**

Iraq's use of chemicals greatly affected our NBC (nuclear, biological, chemical) program. We have incorporated NBC defense into routine military training. We also learned that "moral censure" of Iraq for their use of chemicals did not prevent our soldiers from being gassed on the battlefield.<sup>51</sup>

Because of the lessons learned from this war, we identified an immediate need to reorganize our military structure and modernize our military equipment. Desert Storm further reinforced many of these lessons.

Lessons Learned from the Gulf War (Desert Storm). The UN coalition against Iraq gave us valuable insight into potential

future Regional conflicts involving outside powers. I discuss several key lessons learned below:

### **Be Wary of U.S. "Vital Interests!"**

After years of "hostage paralysis" the United States showed the will to use overwhelming conventional force to protect their "vital interests." The Iraqi attack against the oil fields of Kuwait was a direct attack on the GCC and the vital interests of all the industrial nations. When under attack, industrial vital interests can overcome political, religious and cultural obstacles that might normally appear insurmountable. We must ensure any overt military action we take to resolve a border dispute, restrain ethnic infighting, or protect our oppressed Shiite brothers is not perceived as a threat to Western vital interests.<sup>52</sup>

### **Keep Military Objectives Limited!**

The Iraqi move past the Kuwait oil fields to the border of Saudi Arabia was unnecessary. If Saddam had limited his ambitions to the Rumaila oil fields and the Warba and Bubiyan islands, he could have maintained the perception of settling a border dispute. It is likely that the United States would not have intervened over a "simple border dispute."<sup>53</sup> We recently took back the Abu Musa and Tunb islands from the UAE and have incurred no outside retribution.

### **Avoid Conventional War!**

We have learned that conventional war with the United States would be a big mistake. A UN coalition, led by the United States, trounced Iraq. This defeat of the world's fourth largest army was definitive proof of the superiority of Western technology and training.\* The United States has displayed the will to use conventional force when confronted with conventional aggression. The United States also showed the will to protect the sovereignty of the Arab Gulf states. Until we can force the United States out of Gulf security affairs, we cannot afford to challenge Western supported countries with conventional power.

### **The West is Dependent on Regionally Supported Coalitions!**

The United States made great efforts to create and hold together a multinational coalition that included Regional members. This suggests that the United States will not use unilateral military action to influence Regional conflicts. In the war in Bosnia, for example, the United States has refused to intervene without full European/NATO cooperation.

Western commitment to coalition warfare gives us more flexibility in our military strategy. Unless we directly

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\* "The experience of Iraq in the face of Western military onslaught in the Gulf War merely reinforced the view in Teheran that Iran's armed forces needed modernization in all spheres." Anoushiravan Ehteshami, "The Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran," Jane's Intelligence Review, February 1993, p. 77.

threaten U.S. citizens or their vital interests, the United States will not intervene without a coalition. A coalition has become almost imperative for international legitimacy.

The key to stopping a future coalition is blocking its formation or breaking it in its infancy. We may find unconventional military activities to be our most cost effective means of stopping coalitions against us before they are forged.\* If Regional nations feel directly threatened by our unconventional capabilities, they may be less likely to allow Western powers access to their basing facilities.

#### **Ballistic Missiles Have Great Intimidation Value!**

Although Iraq never used SCUD missiles with NBC munitions, the fear that they might have NBC warheads was rampant during Desert Storm. It is not necessary to have a proven NBC warhead projection capability. The mere threat of ballistic missiles with NBC warheads intimidates Western and Arab Gulf states. This "SCUD fear" provides weaknesses that we can exploit with a credible "SCUD with NBC" capability.

If we used limited WMD against a third party country, it is unclear if the United States would reciprocate in kind. Western culture would forestall the use of WMD unless there was no other alternative. By using WMD in a limited role, we may find a "WMD threshold" that we can stay under without

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\* In this context, unconventional activities include special operations, guerrilla activities, and WMD threats.

suffering massive retaliation. As with conventional weapons, we must ensure that any use of WMD is not targeted at U.S. personnel or vital interests.

**Focus on ADA, AIR-to-AIR Defense and Dig In!**

The destructive power of Western "high-tech" bombing added emphasis for us to control (or at a minimum increase the risk of moving through) our airspace. We also need to fortify and protect command, control, and communication (C3) systems, WMD facilities and other critical military-industrial capabilities against precision bombing.<sup>4</sup>

**We Must Make our Military Embargo Proof!**

The treatment of post war Iraq has clearly shown that having advanced weapons is not enough. The spare parts and ammunition required to maintain operational readiness make the acquisition of "production lines" critical. If we can produce our own replacements we can negate the influence of Western sponsored embargoes.\*

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\* The Iranians have come to realize "the importance of developing a domestic industrial-technological infrastructure--driven by the requirement for military security--that in the long run can lay the foundations for comprehensive national power." Patrick J. Garrity, "Why the Gulf Still Matters: Foreign Perspective on the War and the Future of International Security," Executive Study for the Center for National Security Studies, Report No. 16, July 1993, p. 38.



Based on the lessons learned from both the Eight-year war and Desert Storm, we have reassessed our current and future military requirements. We need to build a balanced defense with both conventional and unconventional capabilities using organic production as much as possible.

## CHAPTER VII

### GENERAL MILITARY FOCUS

For the short term, we have more military limitations than capabilities. To combat our limitations, we have shifted our defense focus to reorganization and modernization. As we carry out these efforts, our conventional military will remain defensive in nature.

It is important for us to rebuild our defense capabilities without inviting a preemptive strike.\* Western powers argue that we are seeking military might to gain Regional hegemony. This Western claim contradicts the facts.\*\* For at least the next ten years we will not have enough offensive power to dominate our Gulf neighbors. The West is inflating our capabilities based on what they perceive

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\* For specific threat discussion see PART IV.

\*\* Some argue "Iran appears to be following the pattern established by Iraq in the mid-to-late 1980s, establishing a broad military industrial manufacturing base to ensure independence from foreign suppliers in the event of future trade or military embargoes." Kenneth R. Timmerman, "Time To Stop Iranian Nuke," Wall Street Journal, 21 April 1993, p. A14.

This argument continues that Iran is bound to use its military in much the same manner as Iraq did, to attack its Gulf neighbors. However, based on weapon procurements, Iran is spending less than in the days of the Shah and about 40% of what Iraq spent in the late 80s. Alan George, "Tehran Asserts its Independence," The Middle East, April 1993, p. 36.

To compare procurement spending for 1993, Iran spent \$1.2 billion, the GCC--\$33 billion, Egypt--\$2.73 billion, Israel--\$6.8 billion and Turkey--\$5 billion. Iran originally programmed \$2 billion in Rafsanjani's "five year plan, but was limited to \$1.2 billion based on the low price of oil. "Arms Race," U.S.-Iran Review, November 1993, p. 3.

to be our intentions. They are labeling our defensive rebuilding program as a threat to peace in the Gulf Region. This directly contradicts our actual military capabilities, both in numbers and in quality.<sup>55</sup>

Our current rebuilding program is critical to recoup our Eight-year war losses. As we obtain modern arms and military production lines, our capabilities will increase in direct proportion to our ability to integrate them into a well organized military structure.

Organization. Our military has a history of disorganization and turmoil. We need to eliminate the internal conflict between the regular military and the Rev Guard. The Rev Guard "parallel chain of command" undermines the existing command chain for the regular forces. To eliminate this friction, we are reorganizing the military chain of command. We are placing both the regular forces and the Rev Guard under the Ministry of Defense. In 1992 we created the "General Command of the Armed Forces Joint Staffs" integrating many parallel units of the Rev Guard into the regular force structure. In addition, we have shifted the primary focus for the Rev Guard to the unconventional arena.\*

To increase the operational readiness of our existing forces, we are reorganizing the personnel and equipment in our conventional units. We are cross-leveling units to reach the

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\* For more on Rev Guard capabilities see CHAPTER X.

Table of Organization and Equipment (TOE) authorized levels. The main problem with reaching our authorized equipment levels is the huge loss of weapon systems during our war with Iraq. The effort to "beef-up" our military units puts great emphasis on obtaining modern military equipment.

Modernization. With U.S. military aid no longer available, our U.S. produced equipment is obsolete and short of spare parts. To replace the deteriorating systems, we have turned to non-aligned countries such as the ex-Soviet republics, China, and North Korea for modern weapons and technology.<sup>56</sup>

The break-up of the Soviet Union has given us access to modern equipment and technology. It created a glut of weaponry that, although not state-of-the-art by Western standards, is clearly superior to what we now own. Weapon sales are big business and the highest bidder, despite ideology or religion, can find a large variety of weapon systems if it has the capital to pay for them. The ex-Soviet states welcome the flow of our petro-dollars in trade for advanced weaponry.\* The low price of oil, however, decreases our purchasing power in the international weapons market; which in turn reduces our ability to modernize.

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\* Such as SU-25 ground attack aircraft from Georgia. "Iran and the Ex-Soviet Union: Great Games," The Economist, 30 January 1993, p. 30.

I discuss specific acquisition opportunities in greater detail under each branch of service.

Another major obstacle to our modernization is U.S. pressure to keep weapons and technology, particularly relating to WMD, out of our hands. However, the current economic pressure felt by the West to "cash-in" on technology to boost their floundering economies is allowing technology to get to us through third parties. The United States and other Western industrialized nations are more interested in selling technology and making money than they are in stopping weapons proliferation in the Persian Gulf Region. Since this flow is subject to Western influence, we must take advantage of Western economic weaknesses to create indigenous production facilities as a hedge against future embargoes.

It is critical to our modernization that we seek the technology and production lines we need to produce our own weaponry. Along with production of weapon systems, we must produce our own ammunition and related spare parts. We need to shift from being a dependent consumer to becoming an independent producer. This "production strategy" will give us the flexibility to resist external embargo pressure.

Recent lessons learned have forced us to set priorities for our modernization program. WMD technology and missile acquisitions are our top priority and are sought whenever an opportunity arises. For conventional weapons procurement, the Air Force has first priority. The Navy is a close second and the Army a distant third.<sup>57</sup> Both The Air Force and Navy can help us defend our long Western borders/shorelines while we

give our conventional ground forces the opportunity to reorganize, modernize and rebuild.

## CHAPTER VIII

### ARMY CAPABILITIES

Our losses from the Eight-year War have severely restricted the Army's offensive capabilities. The primary mission for the Army is border defense oriented toward Iraq. Border incursions by our warring neighbors further stretch our ground resources. Our limited ability to transport or resupply deployed forces makes shifting ground units along our extensive borders extremely difficult.\* To alleviate our shortfalls, the Army is reorganizing its force structure and integrating armored weapon systems, as they become available, to increase their mobility.

Organization. The UN arms embargo against Iraq has reduced Iraq's ability to attack us on the ground. We have been able to pull some Army units from our western border defenses to reconstitute and refit. With an active Army of roughly 300,000, our military leaders are trying to reorganize personnel and equipment in line with our current force structure. In some cases we are eliminating units to increase the operational readiness levels of the remaining units.

Our Army is currently organized with ten divisions. Because of our shortage of armored vehicles, we have turned

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\* Because of limited mobility, Iran would have difficulty defending against an Iraqi attack force of brigade size or larger.

many units that were originally armored or mechanized into light infantry. As the Army continues its reorganization and modernization effort, we may have to downgrade some divisions to separate brigades.

Modernization. Modernization of our inventory of armored ground systems is very difficult. We are having trouble getting replacement parts for the tanks and armored personnel carriers that the United States provided during the reign of the Shah. We have bought some compatible armored systems to "cannibalize" for spare parts; however, we are looking to upgrade our inventory with newer armored vehicles.

Although last in priority among the services for acquiring new systems, the Army has received some Russian T-72 tanks and armored carriers. Our real goal, however, is to develop our own production line for armored systems. We already produce our own small arms, artillery, and ammunition.\*

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\* Iran has been producing spare parts for U.S. made M-47 and M-48 tanks and UK made Chieftons since 1979. Tony Banks and James Bruce, "Iran Builds its Strength," Jane's Defense Weekly, 1 February 1992, p. 159.

The exact numbers of tanks and armored vehicles are not listed on the USNI equipment list by type. The Iranians have obtained similar production capabilities for small arms, artillery and some small aircraft. Peter Lewis Young, "American Perceptions of Iran: The Tradition of Fear and Conflicting Interests Endures," Asian Defense, February 1993, p. 27.



Recent Activities. We have recently deployed ground forces to secure our northern border. The Armenia-Azerbaijan war has threatened to spill over into northern Iran. We need to limit the influx of refugees and protect our water stations and railways along our common border with Azerbaijan. Although we have offered our peace keeping services, we are not actively involved in the combat between the two countries."

## CHAPTER IX

### AIR FORCE CAPABILITIES

The primary Air Force mission is to defend our air space. The lessons learned from the Eight-year and Gulf Wars emphasize our need to defend against modern aircraft, high technology bombing, and cruise missiles. To accomplish this mission, we need to improve our counter-air capabilities and develop an integrated surface-to-air defensive umbrella. While we have had considerable success getting surface-to-air missiles, the heavy training requirements of modern aircraft have hampered our Air Force readiness.

Organization. Our Air Force maintains an active strength of around 35,000. Before the Eight-year War, we had the largest and most modern air force in the Gulf Region. Since then, however, we have been unable to replace our heavy losses. Our aircraft acquisitions have barely kept pace with our retiring air frames.

Our inventory now includes a mix of older Western built and newer Soviet and Chinese manufactured planes. However, most of the operationally ready aircraft used for daily routine sorties continue to be U.S. F-4s and F-5s obtained during the days of the Shah. We have kept these older aircraft flying with spare parts from non-aligned countries

like Pakistan.\* The availability of experienced pilots and well established training and maintenance programs for the F-4s and F-5s makes it likely that they will continue to be our most productive aircraft for several years.

Our ground air defense systems are under the command of the Air Force. To control our air space, we have placed great emphasis on creating an integrated system of surface-to-air missiles supported by modern early warning and target acquisition radars. Enhancing our air defense umbrella will help to limit aerial access to our interior.

Modernization. The Air Force has been the major recipient in our modernization effort. We have recently increased our air frame inventory with Russian and Chinese manufactured planes. The primary problem with our newly acquired aircraft is with training pilots and sustaining a maintenance program.

We have significantly increased our surface-to-air missile inventory and continue to seek state-of-the-art radars. It will be several years before we will attain an integrated air defense umbrella capable of adequately defending our interior.

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\* The Air Force has experienced greater difficulty in finding spare parts for the F-14s. The operational ready F-14 inventory has fallen dramatically in the last several years.

Recent Activities. In April 1992, we conducted an attack against dissident rebel bases sixty miles into Iraq using F-4s and F-5s.\* The continued use of these aging planes for our most critical air missions shows our difficulty in integrating modern aircraft into our operational squadrons.

During the Gulf War, Iraq sent more than 100 planes to Iran seeking refuge. We have added them to our inventory. Primarily French and Soviet made, these planes pose many challenges in pilot training, maintenance and acquisition of spare parts. It will be several years before they will become a viable part of our Air Force.

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\* For more information on dissident threats see CHAPTER XIV.

## CHAPTER X

### NAVAL CAPABILITIES

The primary mission of the Navy is defense of our interests in the Persian Gulf. With our coastline extending the length of the eastern side of the Gulf, we have legitimate naval concerns for the entire Gulf region. Of particular interest is the Hormuz area, where 20% of the world's oil exits the Gulf.<sup>59</sup>

Our Navy also maintains a presence in the Caspian Sea. However, the current situation with our Central Asian neighbors is not threatening. If the situation with the Central Asian Republics deteriorates, we will have to increase our naval assets in the Caspian Sea. Since we have no direct water route from the Gulf to the Caspian Sea, we would have to conduct over-land reinforcements to upgrade our military readiness.<sup>60</sup>

Of the three conventional military arms, the Navy has the greatest Regional power projection capability. As the undisputed local naval power, we retain potential strategic control of the Strait of Hormuz. If we were to restrict traffic through the Strait of Hormuz, we could render most of the Arab oil producing nations land-locked. This would directly affect Bahrain, Kuwait, Iraq, Qatar, and the UAE. Limiting oil export traffic from these countries would greatly

affect the major industrialized nations of the world.\* Our Navy is also involved in joint amphibious operations with Rev Guard units.

Organization. Our Navy consists of roughly 18,000 sailors. Included under its command, the Navy maintains a small air arm and a small marine force. The air arm provides limited surveillance and early warning while our marine units focus on "frogman" operations and are highly skilled in the placement of mines and explosives.

As with the other services, much of the naval inventory consists of aging equipment from the days of the Shah. Although the Navy took losses during the Eight-year War, we have maintained the flow of naval spare parts through third party countries like North Korea.

Modernization. We have significantly increased our naval capabilities by ordering three Kilo class, Russian made submarines.<sup>61</sup> We have received two of them, with one still on order.<sup>62</sup> By adding the Kilo's to our existing mini-sub

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\* Iran understands that this is not a likely scenario given the potential U.S. response. For more on this threat see CHAPTER XVIII.

<sup>61</sup> Recent reports indicate that Russia may not deliver the third Kilo. "Russia Cancels Submarine Sale; Ukraine to Supply Spares," FBIS-NES-94-002, 4 January 1994, p. 48.

The submarine inventory includes five mini-sub, three from North Korea and two built in country. Philip Finnegan, "Iran Navy Buildup Stirs U.S.-Arab Response: Mini-Submarines, Silkworm Missiles Cause Most Fear," Defense News, 6-12 December 1993,

inventory, we can operate undetected in the extremely busy and acoustically noisy water of the Persian Gulf.'

The new Kilo submarines have increased our potential to control traffic around the mouth of the Persian Gulf. They also extend our naval range into the Indian Ocean. Although currently located at Bandar Abbas, we intend to move the Kilo submarines to Chah Bahar. With direct access to the Indian Ocean from Chah Bahar, they could "pose problems for U.S. carrier battle groups attempting to dominate the air-space above the strategically important Strait of Hormuz and the busy shipping lanes inside the Gulf . . . "62

Although it will be several years before the crews will be fully trained, the Kilo submarines could support special operations right away. Likely operations include transporting special forces, laying mines, attaching explosives to oil platforms or placing forces ashore against high value targets such as desalinization plants. 63

We recently purchased a thousand Russian mines with modern magnetic, acoustic, and pressure sensors.64 We could place them along our extended shoreline to defend our interior

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\* Daily traffic in the Gulf includes hundreds of small fishing boats, local transports, and oil tankers. The heavy surface traffic makes detection of underwater submarine movement difficult.

or elsewhere in the Gulf to impede either military or civilian traffic.'

We are also trying to buy rocket propelled mines from China. The Chinese mines (EM52s) could be timed to ignore several ships before engaging a target and could be employed along the deep water routes through the Strait of Hormuz.<sup>65</sup>

The destructive nature of our mines could provide deterrence comparable to our SCUDs. Both mines and Scuds are inexpensive, on hand in large quantities, and could create massive commercial destruction without warning.

We have also been buying Chinese made Silkworm missiles. They give us added capability to control the narrow, deep water routes at the mouth of the Gulf. These systems are mobile, difficult to detect, and inexpensive (in comparison to their targets.) We continue to negotiate with China to get sea-skimming missiles that can hit targets at 120 kilometers.<sup>66</sup> If we find ourselves in a confrontation with a major naval power, our surface-to-ship missiles will help compensate for our lack of surface ships.

In addition, we bought ten small missile-armed boats from China. These boats will most likely be used by the Rev Guard. We are negotiating with China to get a larger class of missile boat to replace our old Western craft.<sup>67</sup> The air arm is also

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\* "The ability to lay mines in covert operations around the Strait of Hormuz and in the busy shipping channels inside the Gulf presents a threat which would be difficult to counter..." John Jordan, "The 'Kilo' Class Submarine," Jane's Intelligence Review, September 1992, p. 431.



getting new equipment for airborne maritime surveillance and early warning."

Recent Activities. Just before Desert Storm, we openly threatened Iraq with closing the Strait of Hormuz. Although that dispute was overcome by Desert Storm, we let the world know we have the capability and will to limit travel through the Strait.

In concert with the Rev Guard, the Navy has conducted several amphibious exercises against high value commercial targets. Our Navy was also involved in taking back firm control of the Abu Musa and Tunb islands from the UAE.\* These three islands are strategically located along the deep water routes at the mouth of the Gulf. We currently have troops and anti-ship missiles deployed on the islands."

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\* The controversy for these islands began when the British withdrew from the region over twenty years ago. In 1971, the Shah agreed with the Emirates (now the UAE) to allow the latter to administer the islands in exchange for Iran maintaining a military base at Abu Musa. The Tunb islands were not inhabited at that time. The agreement included splitting the off shore oil revenues but left the question of sovereignty over the islands unanswered. The UAE accepted this arrangement out of fear for Iran's growing power. In 1992, Iran threw the UAE administrators off the islands and claimed full sovereignty for itself. Iran has allowed UAE citizens to remain as long as they promise to be respectful. This issue was described by the GCC as Iranian saber rattling and has yet to be fully resolved. "Body-Building Iran," The Economist, September 19 1992, p. 49.

" Iran has had missile sites on Abu Musa for many years. Andres de Lionis, "The Coastal Missile Threat in the Middle East," Jane's Intelligence Review, Jan 1994, p. 26.

## CHAPTER XI

### REV GUARD CAPABILITIES

Although the Rev Guard retains assets in all three services, we are phasing them out of direct control over conventional combat missions. They are currently focused on special operations; guerrilla activities; NBC operations; the development and control of ballistic missiles; combating insurgencies; and maintaining recruitment and training cadres for the reserve forces.\* The Rev Guard provides some support to foreign forces such as the 1,000 active duty troops stationed in Lebanon. Other operations include the "support of revolutionary factions in areas such as the Sudan, Lebanon, and Algeria; support of terrorism and assassination; and continued opposition to the Arab-Israeli peace talks."\*\* Most recently we have been supporting the Bosnian Muslims with

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\* Special operations include ground or naval covert attacks against high value civilian targets (such as oil platforms or desalinization plants) and the elimination of dissidents abroad. Special operations and guerrilla activities are intertwined and conducted in support of each other.

\*\* Garrity goes on to explain that Iran has moved its support base for covert political action from Lebanon to Sudan. "Through Sudan, Iran is supporting the anti-regime movements in Egypt, Tunisia, Algeria, and probably some of the Gulf States." Garrity, p. 39.

Pelletiere argues that both the movements in Egypt and Algeria have been wrongfully blamed on Iran. He states that there is no evidence that Iran is directly involved in these two movements. Stephen C. Pelletiere, Islamic Terror and the West: A Question of Priorities. Strategic Studies Institute. U.S. Army War College. 1 June 1993, p. 2.

ammunition, weapons and advisors in their struggle to survive."

History of the Rev Guard. After the revolution in 1979, we created the Rev Guard to protect the interests of the new regime.\* As a counter to the ex-Shah's regular forces, the Rev Guard's position as flag bearers for the revolution gave them elite status. As a result, the Rev Guard enjoyed great autonomy in ground, air, and naval operations during the Eight-year War. As discussed in CHAPTER VI, the power struggle between the regular forces and the Rev Guard had a negative impact on the entire gamut of military operations.

The Rev Guard retains an edge in quality over the regular forces by getting first choice of the new recruits. During time of war, all men and women in our country are subject to military service. Although unsophisticated (as indicated by using reserve soldiers for human wave attacks against Iraq) the Rev Guard can field a military force of approximately two million from its active and reserve structure in time of war."

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\* The Rev Guard is also called the Pasdaran.

\*\* The reserves include The Basij, also known as the "Mobilization of the Oppressed." Recruited from town and village level military organizations, they are organized into 300 person units and deployed to support the Rev Guard in combat. They have gained a reputation of fanaticism for their human wave tactics during the Eight-year War. Another element of the reserve is the home guard. They are charged with rear defense along the borders and shores. There are other paramilitary units that are formed for specific missions to

Organization. Since the Eight-year War, we have reduced the active duty manpower of the Rev Guard to approximately 350,000. The Rev Guard continues to have army, air force and naval units. While the ground forces retain some autonomy, the air and naval forces "are increasingly co-managed by the regular armed forces."<sup>70</sup> To support their shift in missions, the Rev Guard has formed specialized units to control the growing inventories of missiles and NBC equipment.

The Rev Guard ground forces are mostly light infantry with a few armored units. About one-third of the ground forces are committed to "urban protection" against anti-Islamic factions. With the exception of specialized units, such as missile and coastal defense brigades, the remainder of the Rev Guard ground forces support traditional training and operational missions.'

The Rev Guard naval forces are primarily focused on "guerrilla boat operations" against high value commercial targets in the Persian Gulf. These include the infamous fast attack speed boats used against oil platforms and shipping.

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protect the revolution from internal opposition groups, like the Kurdish nationalists.

General figures include about 50,000 paramilitary to include border guards and 200,000 Basij. "Iran," World Defense Almanac, Vol XVII, Issue 1-1993, p. 139.

• The coastal defense forces, which include Silkworm anti-ship missiles systems, are deployed along the Iranian coast, most heavily concentrated near the Hormuz Strait. Ehteshami, pp. 78-79.

The Rev Guard is also responsible for small scale amphibious assaults in the Gulf area.

The Air arm of the Rev Guard encompasses both air-to-air and ground-to-air functions. They primarily use their aircraft in counter-air missions.\* The ground air defense units have been beefed up since the Eight-year war with a combination of U.S. and Russian missile systems. Most of the counter-air systems are located around the capital and are oriented toward the border with Iraq.

Modernization. The Rev Guard receives its fair share of new military equipment.<sup>71</sup> The major differences are for their guerrilla activities. The Rev Guard Navy has received small missile boats and anti-ship missiles for their guerrilla boat operations. Other attempted acquisitions include night vision goggles for our helicopter pilots and remotely piloted vehicles (that could provide a cheap means for delivering ordnance.)<sup>72</sup> The Rev Guard also receives priority acquisitions for the ballistic missile and WMD programs."

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\* Such as the Chinese manufactured F-6s and F-7s.

\*\* For more on ballistic missiles and WMD, see CHAPTER XII.

## CHAPTER XII

### WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION

The West fails to see that all our nuclear activities are defensive in nature. Many of our Regional enemies such as Iraq and Israel have growing inventories of both ballistic missiles and NBC warheads. Israel has a number of nuclear weapons and Iraq will quickly develop a nuclear arsenal once they escape international embargo pressure.<sup>73</sup> Exclusion from Regional collective security forces us to develop WMD for our national defense.\*

The West is concerned with Rev Guard control of our WMD and ballistic missile programs. They fail to understand that the Rev Guard protects our revolution and must be in control of the most critical elements of our national security. Since the Rev Guard has the will to use WMD to defend our revolution, we gain additional influence over our GCC neighbors through fear and intimidation.\*\*

The fear of our neighbors is justified in some respects. Until WMD threats from countries like Iraq and Israel are eliminated, we will continue to develop an indigenous nuclear

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\* For more on these threats see PART IV.

\*\* It must be stressed that the Rev Guard was willing to sacrifice thousands of their own young, untrained (Basiij) reserve forces against Iraqi tanks and fortified positions in massive human waves. I am not sure they would shed a humanitarian tear over using WMD in what they perceive to be the defense of their revolution and/or their nation.

deterrent.<sup>74</sup> We are very serious in our WMD programs and equally serious in our willingness to use them in defense of our nation. Without a concerted effort from the West to halt WMD proliferation, we will become a nuclear power by the year 2000.\*

Nuclear Program. Our nuclear energy program began under the Shah with full U.S. support. Most of our existing assets came from the United States, Germany, and France. When our Islamic regime took power, Western support stopped. We have been forced to look toward less sophisticated nuclear powers for support. Additionally, many of our top nuclear scientists fled Iran during the early days of the revolution.<sup>75</sup>

The United States is limiting our technology access with their "Iran-Iraq Nonproliferation Act." This act targets the transfer of goods and technology that could be used for WMD.<sup>76</sup> The United States "dual containment strategy" specifically limits transfers to us and Iraq. Additionally, The United States has held conferences with the "Group of Seven" (G7) to

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\* The topic of when Iran will get nuclear weapons is debated throughout the media and various intelligence agencies. This region has shown a propensity to fool the rest of the world by acquiring military capabilities well ahead of most predictions. John J. Deyermond, "Iran's Growing Nuclear Weapons Program: A catalyst for Regional Instability in the Middle East," USAWC Military Studies Program Paper, 10 May 1993, p. 20.

solicit an embargo against us for "high-tech" goods.

Fortunately, their efforts have been unsuccessful.'

Despite Western pressure, we are receiving nuclear related equipment and technology from both China and Russia." We have contracts with both countries for nuclear plants. The

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\* The United States has been very active in attempting to get the industrial nations of the world (Group of Seven, G7) to halt dual-use technology exports to Iran. However, "establishing an embargo in today's economic climate could be politically infeasible for many of America's allies...As Iraq's example clearly shows, if the West is to have any hope of stopping Iran from acquiring a clandestine nuclear weapons capability, it must act decisively and in concert to stop the flow of strategic technologies to entities identified with that country's weapons program. Unfortunately [for the United States] that is not happening."

This unwillingness to risk economic fortune to halt proliferation is rampant in the United States as well. "Powerful industrial and high-tech lobbying interest push to scale back export controls to improve the country's trade balance and save jobs." President Clinton recently appointed a former lobbyist for Cray computers, Mr. Rollwagen, as the deputy secretary of the Commerce Department. "In his new position he will not only oversee the promotion of U.S. exports but will control the sale of high-technology for national security reasons." This is the same lobbyist who argued "vigorously for the sale of his company's supercomputers to countries such as China and India, despite objections from the Joint Chiefs of Staff and from the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency that the computers could (and probably would) be used for nuclear-weapons development." America will be unable to convince the G7 to limit high-tech sales when it can itself be accused of "choosing the targets for high-tech embargoes to suit the needs of its foreign trade balance." Timmerman, p. A14.

Tech transfer is also discussed by Michael Schroeder, "The push to Plug Iran's Technological Pipeline," Business Week, 14 June 1993, pp. 31-32.

" This article quotes what it calls a "questionable source" and reports that China "is training many Iranian scientists and has sold the Iranians several caulutrons--magnetic-isotope separation devices similar to ones that Iraq used to derive enriched uranium for its atom-bomb research. John J. Fialka, "Iran Nuclear Power Effort Hides Drive for Weapons, Some U.S. Analyst Say," Wall Street Journal, 11 May 1993, p. A14.



only obstacle to breaking ground on the construction of these plants is financing. The low price of oil is again a factor in limiting our ability to buy critical elements of our national security program.<sup>77</sup> Additionally, we continue to seek nuclear technology from Argentina, Brazil, France, Germany, India, and Pakistan.<sup>78</sup>

The exact status of our nuclear program is of great concern to the West. Some Western experts report that our present resources are not adequate to produce nuclear weapons before the turn of the century. They fail to consider that we could buy warheads from the cash poor ex-Soviet republics like Kazakhstan and mine them for fissile material. Access to fissile material would speed up our nuclear program by several years.\*

A key question asked by the West is "Why does Iran, which controls an abundance of oil and natural gas, continue to pursue the development of nuclear energy?" Our response is

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\* The debate over whether Iran has obtained nuclear warheads is ongoing. "In January 1992, a task force of the House Research Committee said there was a '98% certainty' Iran had bought parts for at least two Soviet-designed nuclear warheads and was preparing to assemble them..." However a follow-up IAEA inspection failed to prove they had been obtained. Fialka, p. A14.

A separate report states that "Iran had received two 40-kiloton missile warheads, a 50-kiloton aerial bomb and a nuclear artillery shell." Alan George, "A Bomb for the Ayatollahs?" The Middle East, October 1992, p. 23.

Deyermond also goes into the discussion of Iran's attempts to acquire fissile material in great detail. His paper is a very good wrap-up on Iran's entire nuclear program. Deyermond, pp. 20-37.

obvious: nuclear status equals international prestige. In addition, the fact that we are surrounded by nuclear powers such as Pakistan, Russia, Israel, Kazakhstan, India, and perhaps Iraq, makes the continuation of our nuclear program defensive in nature and critical to our national survival.\*

Current Nuclear Status. We have a small research reactor in operation and two partially completed nuclear power plants at Bushehr. We can mine and refine uranium ore but have no means to enrich that uranium or to convert it into plutonium.<sup>79</sup> The small reactors could provide laboratory quantities sufficient for weapons testing purposes. Some of our nuclear technologists remained after the revolution but they lack practical or recent experience. However, the fall of the Soviet Union has provided "nuclear technocrat mercenaries" to fill our shortage of experience.<sup>80</sup> When we get fissile material, we will be able to produce nuclear weapons. The real question is not "can we make nuclear explosives, but rather how well designed and powerful they will be."<sup>81</sup>

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\* This is my assessment of how Iran would view their need for nuclear weapons. Although I don't agree, it can be argued that all of Iran's nuclear research is strictly for commercial use. However, even if it isn't proven that Iran is building nuclear bombs, "the Iranian leadership has decided to pursue a program that gives it the option to make that decision in the future." "Arms Race," p. 3.

Ballistic Missiles. We have a large inventory of short range ballistic missiles that are primarily variants of the SCUD. They are short ranged and cannot reach much further than the far side of the Gulf. We are seeking more advanced, longer range ballistic missiles from North Korea.\* North Korea has already sold us some technological and managerial expertise to produce advanced ballistic missiles.<sup>82</sup> In addition, we have arranged with North Korea for delivery of 150 ballistic missiles that could be fitted with chemical or conventional warheads.<sup>83</sup> These missiles would provide delivery capability for our existing chemical stocks of mustard, cyanide, phosgene and nerve agents.<sup>84</sup> Just as with nuclear armed medium-range ballistic missiles, those armed with persistent chemicals could provide Regional deterrence.

We will continue to build our WMD. Our national defense is dependent on our ability to pose a credible WMD threat as we work to rebuild our conventional forces. In our volatile Region, WMD may prove to be a great equalizer by providing

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\* Many recent publications speculate that North Korea may provide Nodong missiles to Iran. The Nodong is thought to have the ability to project either a small nuclear (50-kiloton) or a chemical (VX) warhead at a range between 800 and 1000 kilometers. Paul Beaver, "Nodong-1 Details Fuel New Fears in Asia," Jane's Defense Weekly, 13 January 1993, p. 4.

There are also reports of an Iranian-N. Korean joint test program for a more advanced missile that could range out to Israel and most of the Middle East. This capability would make Iran second only to Saudi Arabia in regional missile strength. Kevin Rafferty, "Iran and N. Korea 'To Test Missile'," The Guardian, 26 October 1993, p. 20.

deterrence from the evolving threats to our national security.'

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I think that Iran would only use nuclear weapons as a deterrent. At least for the next ten years, their production of a nuclear weapon would be very crude by Western standards. As a true weapon of mass destruction, Iran may develop a chemical MRBM capability that can serve the same purpose with higher chance of success.

Iran would be irrational (by Western standards) to launch any sort of WMD. Their technology and inventory have little hope of matching Israel or the Western powers. If Iran is successful in getting the United States to disengage from security agreements in the Region and the GCC states were left to fend for themselves, then the intimidation value of Iran's WMD would increase significantly!

## **PART IV**

### **NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY**

**We seek to achieve four political goals with our National Security Strategy: maintaining the Islamic Revolution; national defense; leadership in Persian Gulf security; and gaining influence in Central Asian economics. Each of these goals has inherent threats; some of which we can resolve with careful application of military power.\***

**While using our military, we must be wary of retaliatory thresholds. We cannot afford to directly confront either Western nations or their vital interests and open ourselves up to an attack by a Western led coalition, except as a last resort."**

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**\* Use of other than military strategies is beyond the scope of this paper.**

**\*\* Current examples of successful brinkmanship are the North Koreans and the Bosnian Serbs. Both are achieving their political goals with intimidation and force, while safely evading a retaliatory military response.**

## CHAPTER XIII

### SECURITY STRATEGIES

Based on our current and projected military capabilities, we have developed three military strategies. The first is diplomacy with intimidation. The second is deterrence. And the third is covert, guerrilla activities.\* Based on the threat, we can use these strategies individually or in unison. There are no clean boundaries between these strategies. Once implemented, we must constantly adjust them to ensure that they are working toward the political goals they support.

Diplomacy. We use a combination of veiled military threats and diplomacy to influence Regional affairs. This strategy relies on opportunism and can be either short or long term in duration. The objective for this strategy is to shift the balance of power for a specific political goal. The desired end state is not to topple the targeted government, but rather, to force them to accede diplomatically to our will. When using this strategy, we must be careful not to let a conflict escalate out of proportion to the original political goal. Based on our conventional shortfalls, we are

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\* Based on Iranian military capability shortfalls, a ground invasion is not an option for at least the next ten years.

dependent on unconventional intimidation to make this strategy work.\*

Deterrence. In implementing our deterrence strategy, we plan preemptive strikes or the threat of retaliatory military force to counter a threat to our vital interests. While our intent is to create long term deterrence, if a military confrontation evolves, it should be swift and decisive. When it is not decisive, a long term military campaign (like the Eight-year War) may follow. This strategy is defensive in nature and includes the use of all available assets to deter enemy aggression against our vital interests.

As with diplomacy, we are not attempting to topple the enemy's government. Rather, our objective is to protect the status quo. Based on current capabilities we can apply a combination of conventional and special operations assets, dependent on the level of the threat. As we develop WMD, they will provide added deterrence to forestall enemy aggression.

Covert Guerrilla Activities. The third strategy, the covert support of guerrilla activities is a long term military commitment. Through covert support of opposition groups in other countries, we seek to overthrow the ruling government.

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\* Examples of unconventional intimidation are guerrilla boat and special operations exercises against high value commercial targets. Chemical and nuclear missiles (as they are acquired) will also have intimidation value.

This strategy risks retaliation from the targeted government. Our support may include money, supplies, weapons, military training, or advisors.

With our current and projected capabilities, these three military strategies have the greatest potential for successfully achieving our political goals. Based on the dynamics of our Region, each political goal requires a mix of military strategies to target inherent threats.



## CHAPTER XIV

### MAINTAINING THE REVOLUTION

The primary political goal of our government is to maintain the Islamic Revolution. After years of repressive Western supported rule under the Shahs, we must retain the autonomy of our Islamic Revolutionary Party.

We are confronted with three major threats. Internal politics, dissident counter-revolutionary movements, and potential external backlash for our support of revolutions in other countries.

Internal Threat. Our internal politics allow for active participation of the radical, moderate, and conservative factions within the party. Although challenged daily by each faction, the threat of an overthrow of the government from within the Islamic Party is minimal. Following the Eight-year War, we had a peaceful transition in power between the radical and moderate factions while the Islamic Revolutionary Party remained in full control of the government. Although our internal politics will remain active and heated, the use of our military is not necessary to quell the threat of a counter-revolution from within the ruling party.

Dissident Threat. The military can be used to defend the revolution against dissident movements from outside our

Islamic Revolutionary Party. We have special operations units within the Rev Guard to deal with dissidents in our country and abroad. We do not tolerate open expression of anti-government policies and will quell any movement that threatens our Revolution. This includes attacking across international borders to preempt counter-revolutionary forces before they can pose a direct threat to our Islamic Revolution. To counter this threat we use the deterrence strategy. Military assets that we have used recently include Air Force raids against rebel bases in Iraq and covert hit squads that tracked down and killed dissidents in the streets of Europe.\*

External Backlash. We support the plight of Shiite minorities that are fighting oppression in other countries. As the leader of the Shiite people, we must attempt to protect them whenever feasible. We are open to criticism for our role in defending their rights by the governments that oppress them. Our support may risk military confrontation if we are perceived as overly subversive. Therefore, we must rely on

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\* One example of the rebel groups that have come under attack is the "People's Mujahdeen of Iran". They are a Moslem nationalist movement that originally formed to fight the Shah. They exist with support from Iraq just across the common border with Iran. Their strength figures are estimated at 15,000 to 40,000. They also have some tanks, armored carriers, and rocket launchers taken from Iran during the Iran-Iraq war. They are not perceived as being a viable military threat to Iran in the next ten years without some sort of popular uprising from the Iranian people. John G. Roos, "Group Unveils Iran's Nuke Weapon Plan, Plots 'Equal Opportunity' Overthrow," Armed Forces Journal, March 1992, p. 26 and 28.

covert guerrilla support to Shiite revolutions. An example of this strategy is our ongoing support of the Shiite revolution in Lebanon.

## CHAPTER XV

### NATIONAL DEFENSE

The ability to defend our nation from attack is crucial to our national security. If we cannot defend ourselves, we have little hope of achieving the other three political goals. Our main strategy for this goal is Regional deterrence.

Because of our geostrategic location, the potential threats to our national borders are numerous. Two possible scenarios are an Iraqi invasion and spill over from local wars.

Iraqi Invasion. Another Iraqi invasion, although not imminent, is our greatest threat. The 1988 cease-fire did not settle the issues that caused the Eight-year War.\* Although the United States sponsored embargo is keeping Iraq in check, Iraq will rebound quickly once the UN lifts the embargo. With the exception of naval assets, Iraq has numerical superiority over our military in virtually every major category. They have a much stronger military-industrial complex, and are more technologically and organizationally advanced than we are.<sup>35</sup>

Our strategy against Iraq is deterrence. We have begun extensive modernization and reorganization efforts to achieve enough military power to deter future Iraqi aggression. We

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\* The major cause of the war, control over the Shatt-al-Arab waterway, is still unresolved from Iraq's perspective.

will continue to monitor our border defense requirements with Iraq and will redeploy ground forces based on the evolving threat. In addition, Iraq's use of chemical weapons during the Eight-year War proves that we must also develop WMD for deterrence. With the threat that Iraq will be able to produce nuclear weapons shortly after the UN embargo is lifted, we must develop both chemical and nuclear missiles as part of our WMD deterrence.

War Spill Over. Spill over from wars near our borders is a lesser threat that requires deterrence attention. Two current examples are the Afghan Civil War and the Armenia-Azerbaijan War. We are not involved militarily in either of these wars. But the proximity of these conflicts to our borders has caused the influx of refugees.

Although not a cause for direct military conflict, the problem of controlling refugees stretches our military assets.\* Refugee camps pose both internal and external threats. Internally, they act as breeding areas for ethnic dissension that dissident groups in our country can use

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\* The security of our borders sometimes includes resources such as rivers or rail lines. For example, in Azerbaijan, we have used our troops to protect jointly operated hydroelectric complexes and vital railheads on both sides of the border. Bizhan Torabi, "Iranian Soldiers seize key posts inside the border with Azerbaijan," The Ottawa Citizen, 7 September 1993, p. A6.

against us. Externally, our neighbors may attempt preemptive attacks against combatants that hide among the refugees'

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• In Azerbaijan for example, "According to the United Nations High Commission for Refugees, some 400,000 displaced Azeris have gathered along the border with Iran. Teheran is concerned that the arrival of large numbers of Azeri refugees might inflame passions among Iran's own estimated 10 million ethnic Azeris, so it wants to keep as many displaced Azeris inside Azerbaijan as possible." Bizhan Torabi, "Iranian Soldiers seize key posts inside the border with Azerbaijan," The Ottawa Citizen, 7 September 1993, p. A6.

## CHAPTER XVI

### LEADERSHIP IN PERSIAN GULF SECURITY

We must become the leader in security for the oil producing nations of the Persian Gulf. With the largest populace and the longest shoreline on the Gulf, we are the natural choice to lead a collective security arrangement in the Region.\* However, Western influence is blocking not only our leadership, but our membership in Gulf security.

Growing Western influence, highlighted by the war in Kuwait, challenges our participation in Regional Security. When the Gulf Arab rulers invited Western powers to repulse Saddam Hussein's forces from Kuwait, they reinforced their mistrust of both Iraq and us.<sup>6</sup> The GCC's growing dependence on foreign powers like the United States undermines our potential leadership position in Regional security affairs. Without Western involvement, GCC members would have to include us in any security arrangements.

Despite our moderate stance and improved relations with the GCC nations, we are portrayed as a threat to Gulf security. The United States is trying to use our Islamic revolution as a threat replacement for communism. By spreading the perception that we are evil, the United States is trying to justify its status as a global protector. In

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\* If Western influence is eliminated, Iran will have to ensure that other regional powers don't fill the gap.

addition, the United States has profited from this fear by selling arms throughout the Region. <sup>87</sup>

To force our inclusion in a Gulf security agreement we can use the diplomacy strategy. With our Kilo submarines, mines and anti-ship missiles we have the capability to undermine the security efforts of the West.\* By proving that the GCC has more to gain from allying with us than with their ties to the West, we can diplomatically persuade them to seek our protection. If these nations are subject to the threat of special operations or guerrilla warfare, and the United States does not respond, they will turn away from the West and toward us for their security guarantees.

Chemical or nuclear weapons would further support our diplomacy strategy by providing a convincing tool for local intimidation. As a the leader in Regional security, nuclear status would also enable us to offer nuclear deterrence coverage to our prospective security partners.

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\* These activities could include a show of force against critical oil facilities, desalinization plants, or in the Strait of Hormuz. As learned from the Gulf War, Iran would need to be wary of U.S. vital interests. In addition, Iran must avoid frightening these countries into seeking even closer security arrangements with the West.



## CHAPTER XVII

### ECONOMIC INFLUENCE IN CENTRAL ASIA

Now that the Soviet threat has dissolved, there is fierce competition between Turkey, Russia, and us for economic influence in Central Asia. Because of our geostrategic location, we can offer the Central Asian Republics the best trade routes to exploit their natural resources.

Turkish Threat. With the Soviet threat gone, Turkey is free to expand its influence to the east and south. Turkey is very active in fighting for economic and political influence in the new provinces. The "secular appeal" of their government and economy gives them an advantage when dealing with ex-Soviet provinces. However, they are in a terrible geographic location and must travel through Russia, Azerbaijan, or us to reach the Central Asia Republics.

For years, Turkey has been the beneficiary of huge NATO defense investments. We cannot compete militarily with Turkey. Their inventory of conventional weapons and access to technology are far superior to ours. However, we have an edge over Turkey in ballistic missiles. A deterrence strategy using WMD may be our only means of deterring Turkey if their expansion threatens our vital interest.

Russian Threat. Russia has also tried to regain influence with these Republics. Russia has nothing to offer them except policies that reflect the same economics that brought down the Soviet Union. However, Russia has the military power to force its will in parts of Central Asia. If Russia invaded Central Asia, we would not have the military force to stop them. However, we could implement a covert guerrilla strategy to support the Central Asian Republics with war fighting materials.\*

In addition, the repressive nature of the Soviet empire has weakened religious influence in Central Asia. We see great potential as the provinces are allowed to return to their Islamic roots. We will stand vigilant in our support of their Islamic activities. We can gain great economic influence along our northern borders by establishing economic, and perhaps religious ties with Central Asia.

For the next decade we will be rebuilding. The devastation to our infrastructure and our military from the Eight-year War has given us many challenges. The low price of oil has further depleted our resources. The dynamics of our the Region has provided both opportunities and instability. We must take full advantage of the embargo against Iran to

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\* The war would be similar to the Soviet-Afghanistan war with Iran playing the part of the United States. With Iran's investment in weapons production, a protracted guerilla war in Central Asia would provide a lucrative market for Iranian weapon sales.

rebuild our defenses and seek parity in military capabilities to achieve deterrence. As we move into the 21st Century, we must keep our political goals in focus. With a pragmatic execution of our National Security Strategy, we can resurge as a dominant power in the Region.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### OTHER THREATS

There are many other threats that challenge our political goals. Two examples are the Israeli threat and the threat posed by the low price of oil.

Israeli Threat. Israel's existence (and the ongoing Israeli-Arab peace process) challenges our political goals. Three of our political goals are directly threatened: maintaining the Islamic revolution, national defense, and our leadership in Gulf security.

Threat to the Islamic Revolution. The existence of Israel is a direct affront to our Revolution from a theological perspective.\* Jews and Moslems have been fighting for thousands of years, to include four major wars in the last half century. Israel controls East Jerusalem where some of our Moslem holy places are located.

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\* "Any sort of peace settlement with Israel is seen as an intolerable affront to Islam and as a negation of Iran's Islamic identity...Described by the current Islamic leadership in Teheran as 'a cancerous growth in the Middle East,' Israel is approached as a malignancy not because of its particular policies, but because it is a Jewish State. Short of ceasing to exist, therefore, there is absolutely nothing Jerusalem can do to satisfy Iran." Louis Rene Beres, "Israel, Iran, and Prospects for Nuclear War in the Middle East," Strategic Review, Spring 1993, p. 53.

We cannot directly confront Israel militarily because of their superior air force and more advanced ballistic missiles and WMD. We are using the strategy of covert guerrilla warfare by supporting anti-Israeli movements that challenge Israel's existence.' In doing so, we are aware that we risk retaliation if covert support can be directly attributed to our government.

Threat to National Security. Additionally, Israel could perceive our WMD programs as a direct threat to their national security." Israel has been known to use preemptive strikes against perceived threats. The commander of the Israeli Air Force stated in the summer of 1992 that Israel did not rule out military means to curb our nuclear progress."

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"Iran is already at war with the Jewish state, an insurgent war utilizing the Hezbollah surrogate organization in the Bekaa (Lebanon). Representing the active terror arm of Iran, Hezbollah is an extremist Islamic force animated only by the path of 'armed struggle.' Informed observers currently estimate its strength at four 'brigades,' totalling about 1,000 armed men." With a moderate government, it is difficult to assess exactly how much actual control Iran has over groups like the Hezbollah. Other similar groups include the Palestinian Jihad and Hamas. All three groups are terrorist oriented and almost certainly get at least financial support from the radical faction of the Islamic Revolutionary Party in Tehran. Beres, p. 53.

"Iran is relentlessly pursuing a nuclear program which, combined with its unalterable theological commitment to the destruction of Israel, bodes ill for the Middle East. If unhindered, Iranian development of a nuclear arsenal may convince Israel that its security requires it to 'preempt'." Beres discusses the preemptive option in great detail. Although I feel his writing is slanted toward the Israeli perspective, it is an in depth look at the question of Nuclear war between Israel and Iran. Beres, p. 52.

We understand that we cannot afford to trade WMD volleys with Israel, which already has a large nuclear arsenal and access to advanced Western technology.

We must put in place a WMD deterrent strategy. We need to develop our WMD capability before Israel can launch a preemptive strike. Once we have WMDs, Israel will be less willing to risk a preemptive strike that would trigger a retaliatory strike from us.

Threat to Leadership in Gulf Security. Israel, with its massive U.S. support, is an unwanted extension of U.S. influence in the Region.\* If a peace is found between Israel and its Arab neighbors, Western peacekeepers will undoubtedly be part of the package. Our current efforts to eliminate the West from defense arrangements in the Persian Gulf would be adversely affected by additional Western influence in the Middle East."

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\* Ex-CIA Director Robert Gates stated that Iran regards Israel as not only a strategic threat but as a "Western beachhead in the Islamic world." He also expected "Iran to continue to strongly oppose Middle East peace negotiations and to promote guerrilla operations aimed at undermining the talks." Richard McKenzie, "Iran Resurgent," Air Force Magazine, July 1992, p. 81.

" A counter argument can be made that peace between Israel and her neighbors would actually reduce U.S. presence. With a decrease in threat to Israel, the United States might be tempted to reduce support to Israel. This would be a very pragmatic view and unlikely to be taken by Iran given the current power of the radical faction of the Islamic party.

We must be very careful in our efforts to stop this peace process. Syria, our longest standing ally, is deeply involved in trying to resolve their conflict with Israel.\* To keep from alienating Syria we will project a moderate position in public, while we undermine the peace effort with continued support to the covert guerrilla strategy already in place."

Low Price of Oil Threat. The low price of oil is a direct threat to our national security. Low oil prices reduce the money available to fund our national security strategies. If the price of oil drops to the point where we can no longer defend our nation and we see our revolution on the brink of collapse, we will risk confrontation with the West. We are capable of closing the Strait of Hormuz and holding Gulf oil hostage.""

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\* "Syria has been Iran's main ally for 11 years. The two nations want to tighten military ties but their political relations have been complicated recently by Syria's participation in the U.S.-sponsored Middle East peace talks with Israel, which Iran opposes." "News Highlight," Early Bird, 16 November 1993, p. 18.

" While Iran and Iraq were fighting the Eight-year War, Iran had little direct involvement in Syria's conflict with Israel. Syria and Israel have grown tired of their fighting. Syria would be very unreceptive to open interference from Iran as they negotiate their peace with Israel.

"" During the Eight-year war, Rafsanjani (as the Speaker of the Parliament) stated that under specific conditions Iran had the will to close the Strait of Hormuz. At the time he was referring to Iraq's bombing of Iranian oil assets and said if it continued, and Iran could not export oil, they would block the Strait. He went on to say it was unlikely, but that it was a possibility if Iran had nothing left to lose. Amirahmadi, p. 39.

Closing the Strait of Hormuz would risk a confrontation with the West and would only be done as the last resort. However, if we are successful in reducing Western presence with our diplomacy strategy, the mere threat of closing Hormuz may be sufficient to drive up the price of oil. An increase in the cost of oil may appear more reasonable to the West than risking military confrontation.\*

For the next decade we will be rebuilding. The devastation to our infrastructure and our military from the Eight-year War has given us many challenges. The low price of oil has further depleted our resources. The dynamics of the Region have provided both opportunities and instability. We must take full advantage of the embargo against Iran to rebuild our defenses and seek parity in military capabilities to achieve deterrence. As we move into the 21st Century, we must keep our political goals in focus. With a pragmatic execution of our National Security Strategy, we can resurge as a dominant power in the Region.

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\* Iran's leverage increases in direct proportion to their ability to deter U.S. response either with their growing inventory of mines, anti-ship missiles, and submarines or by acquiring a WMD deterrent.



## NOTES

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6. The number of Azeris that live in Azerbaijan and Iran differ depending on the source, but all agree that Iran has significantly more Azeris than Azerbaijan. One source says there are 6 million Azeris in Azerbaijan and there are approximately 9 million Azeris in Iran. Fuller, p. 171 Other sources place the numbers at 16 million in Iran and 8 million in Azerbaijan. "APS Diplomat Redrawing the Islamic Map" Arab Press Service Organization, 14 June 1993.
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10. Central Intelligence Agency, Atlas of the Middle East (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, January 1993), pp. 16-17.
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22. Clawson, p. 80.
23. Patrick J. Garrity, Why the Gulf War Still Matters: Foreign Perspectives on the War and the Future of International Security (Center for National Security Studies, Los Alamos National Laboratory, 1993), No. 16, p. 38.
24. Fuller, pp. 44-45. The author does not include Syria; however, Syria has a Kurdish population.
25. Clawson, p. 78. Azeri nationalists have also suggested that the Iranian Azeris and their territory belong to Azerbaijan. "Azerbaijan - Suspicions Of Moscow and Iran," Arab Press Service Organization, 14 June 1993.
26. Garrity, p. 37.
27. Clawson, p. 37.
28. Roger M. Savory, "Religious Dogma and the Economic and Political Imperatives of Iranian Foreign Policy," Iran at the Crossroads, Miron Rezun ed., (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1990), p. 52.
29. Ibid., p. 53.
30. Diller, p. 135. Focus of this article was on political and economic realities. Certainly the Sunni and Shiite differences will have influence, especially for Iran. The

different social standards were discussed in an anonymous interview, U.S. Naval War College, Newport, RI: 17 December 1983.

31. Fuller, p. 92.

32. Clawson, p. 41.

33. Fuller, p. 16.

34. These have been compiled from several sources and the instability in the region could create more border disputes. Clawson, pp. 38-42 describes several of these disputes. Ambassador Eilts outlined the disputes over the demarcation lines in the Gulf.

35. Pipes, p. 126.

36. Ibid., p. 75.

37. Ibid., p. 83.

38. Ibid., p. 88.

39. Ibid., p. 111.

40. Pipes, pp. 138-140.

41. FBIS-NES-93-231, 3 December 1993, page 54.

42. Anthony Hyman, "Moving out of Moscow's Orbit: The Outlook for Central Asia," International Affairs, 69, 2 (1993), pp. 289-290.

43. Eric Hoogland, "Iran's Foreign Policy Interests, the Search for Stability and Development," U.S. - Iran Review. Volume 1, Number 8, (Washington: November 1993), pp. 8-9.

44. Ibid., p. 197.

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46. Stephen J. Blank, Afghanistan and Beyond: Reflections on the Future of Warfare, (Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College, 28 June 1993), pp. 23-24

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48. Fuller, p. 233.

49. I used the USNI Database throughout PART III and IV for the historical details. U.S. Naval Institute "Iranian Order of Battle" USNI Database, 15 April 1992.
50. Taken from a 1992, U.S. Congressional study cited in "Iranian Rearmament: Myth or Reality," Fair Foundation: Forum on American-Iranian Relations, April 1993, p. 4.
51. Ibid., p. 8.
52. Patrick J. Garrity, "Why the Gulf Still Matters: Foreign Perspective on the War and the Future of International Security," Executive Study for the Center for National Security Studies, Report No. 16, July 1993, p. 41. This article goes into a lot of depth on Iranian perceptions.
53. Ibid., p. 40.
54. David A. Fulghum, "Mideast Nations Seek To Counter Air Power," Aviation Week and Space Technology, 7 June 1993, p. 77.
55. "Iranian Rearmament" p. 10.
56. Ibid., p. 3.
57. Anoushiravan Ehteshami, "The Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran," Jane's Intelligence Review, February 1993, p. 77. This article discusses Navy and Air Force priorities for modernization.
58. Bizhan Torabi, "Iranian Soldiers Seize Key Posts Inside the Border with Azerbaijan," The Ottawa Citizen, 7 September 1993, p. A6.
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60. Ehteshami, p. 77
61. John Jordan, "The 'Kilo' Class Submarine," Jane's Intelligence Review, September 1992, p. 427. This article includes a complete history of the Kilo class submarine, to include capabilities, advantages, and disadvantages.
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65. Ibid., p. 29.
66. Ibid.
67. Ibid.
68. Ehteshami, p. 79.
69. "Body-Building Iran," The Economist, September 19 1992, p. 49.
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71. Ibid., p. 79.
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73. Zachary S. Davis and Warren H. Donnelly, "Iran's Nuclear Activities and the Congressional Response," Congressional Research Service Issue Brief, 5 October 1992, summary.
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80. Deyermond, p. 32. Also discussed by John G. Roos, "Group Unveils Iran's Nuke Weapon Plan, Plots 'Equal Opportunity' Overthrow," Armed Forces Journal, March 1992, p. 26.
81. Davis, summary.
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83. "World-Wide: An Iranian Military....," Wall Street Journal, 9 April 1993, p. A1.

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85. "Iranian Rearmament," pp. 1-13.

86. "Arms Race," U.S.-Iran Review, November 1993, p. 3.

87. Garrity, p. 37.

88. "Iranian Rearmament," p. 94.

FIGURE 1  
CENTRAL LOCATION OF IRAN

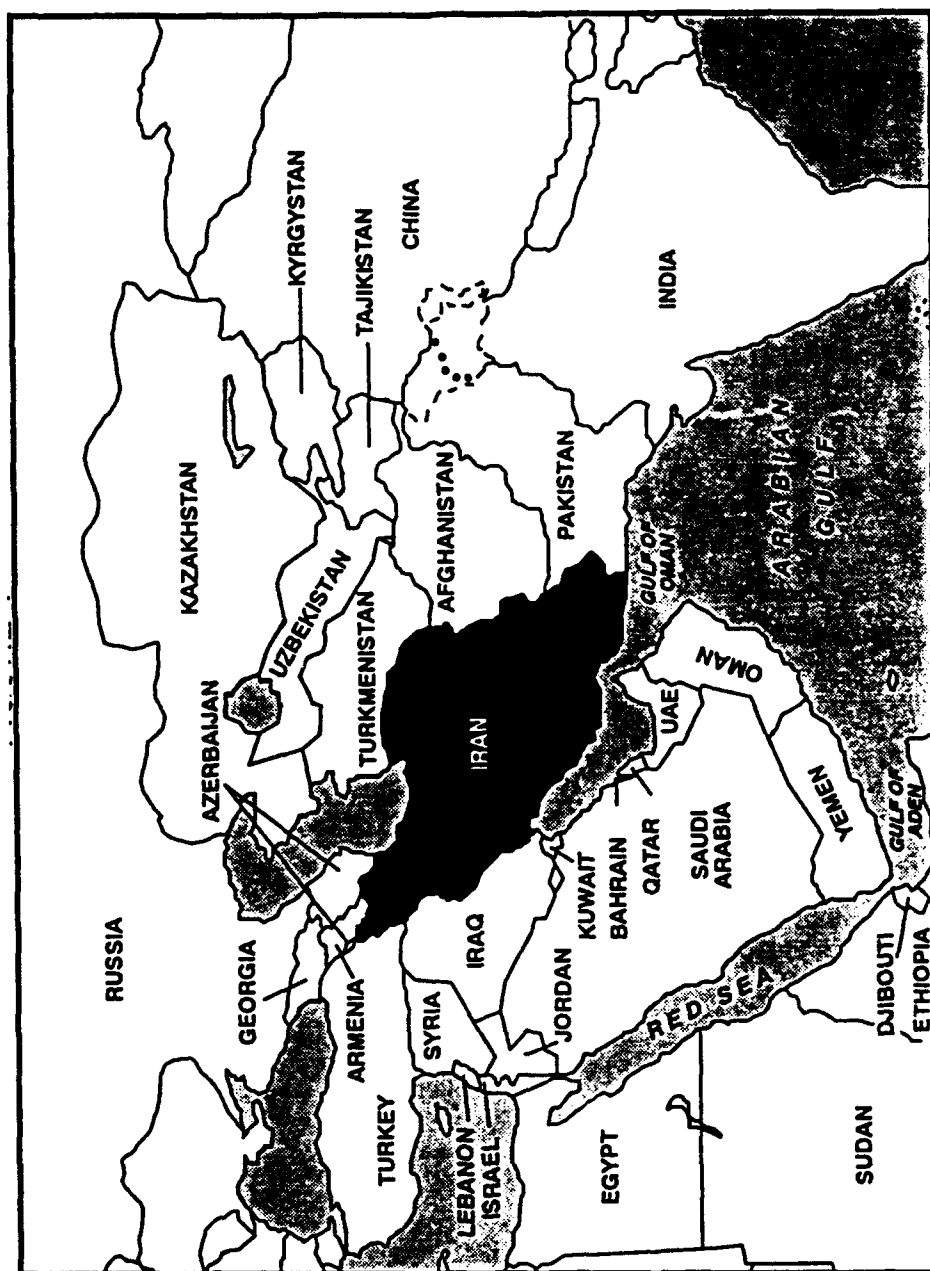
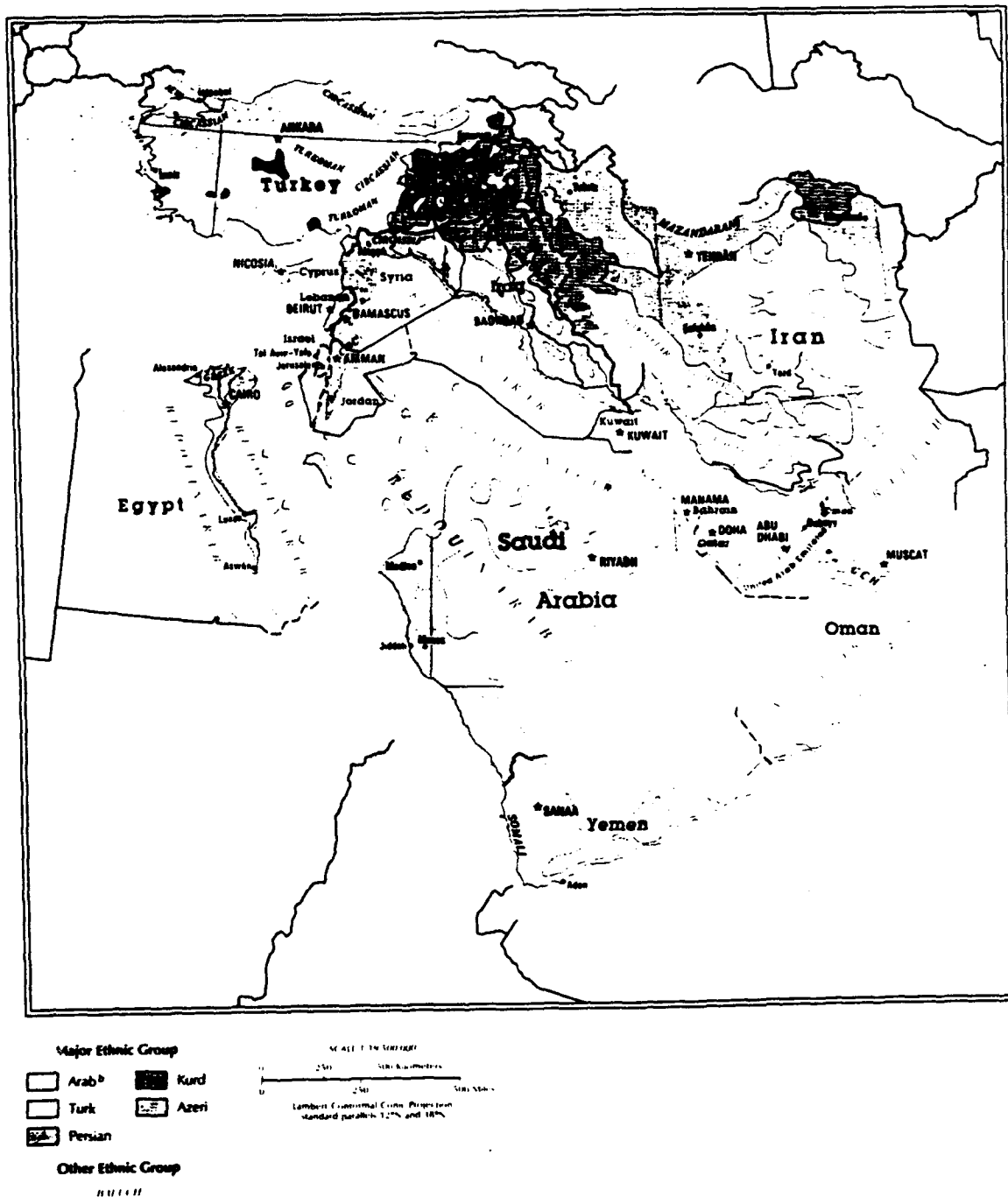


FIGURE 2  
ETHNIC GROUPS THAT BORDER IRAN

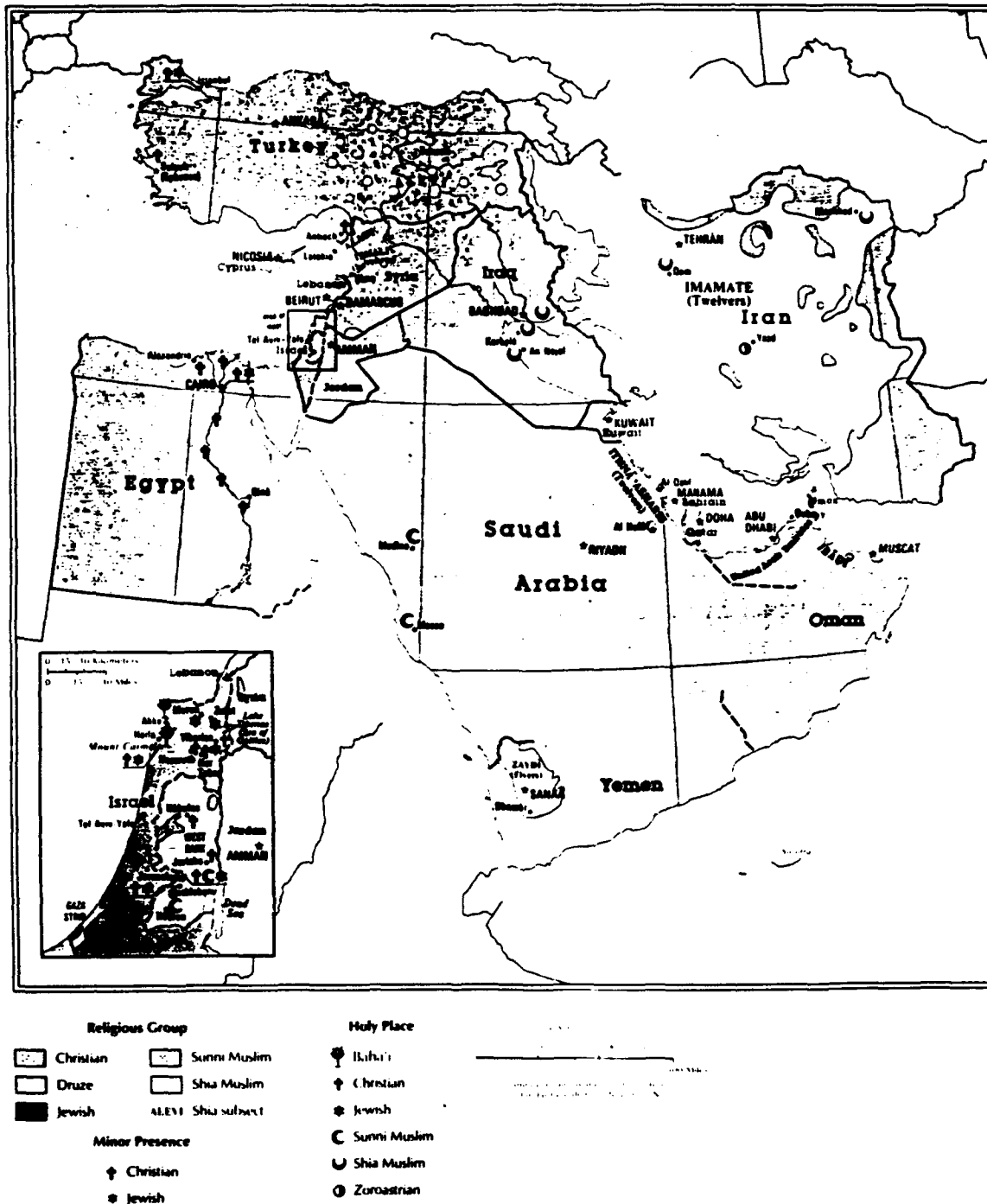


<sup>b</sup>Excludes Bedouin Arab.  
Note: Armenian abbreviated as ARMA.

Source: Central Intelligence Agency, Atlas of the Middle East, (Washington: U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1993), p. 15.

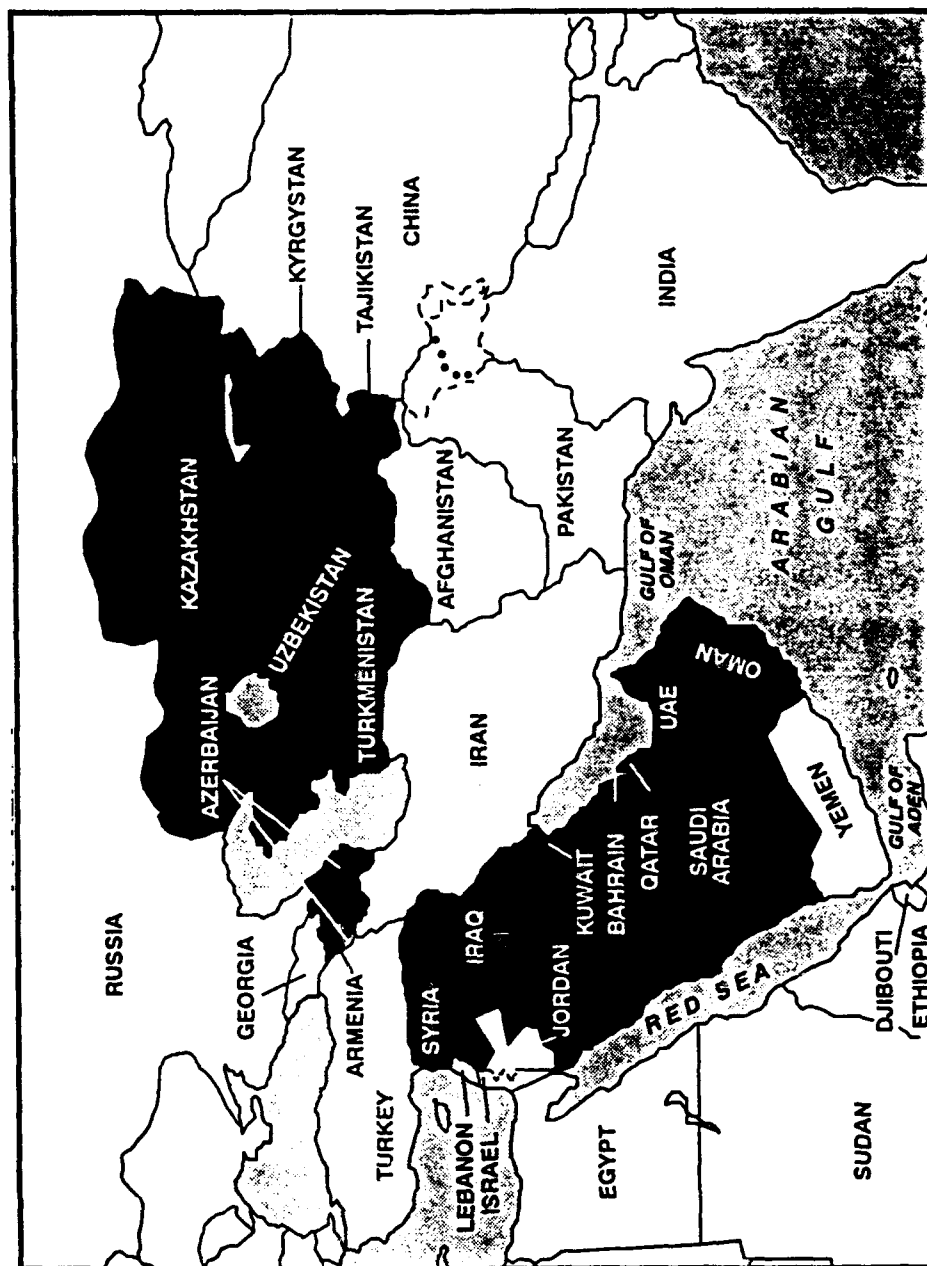


FIGURE 3  
RELIGIOUS DIFFERENCES IN THE REGION



Source: Central Intelligence Agency, Atlas of the Middle East, (Washington: U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1993), p. 16.

FIGURE 4  
 IRAN'S DESIRED AREA OF INFLUENCE



**APPENDIX I**  
**POLITICAL SYSTEM**

## POLITICAL SYSTEM

After our Islamic Revolution, there were many predictions that our new government would collapse. Despite these dire predictions, we have created a functioning government.<sup>1</sup> Our Constitution was ratified in 1979, which defines the political, economic and social order of the Republic.<sup>\*</sup>

Political Organization. We have an Islamic Leader and three branches of government; the executive branch, the legislative branch, and the judicial branch. The political power is divided between the Leader and the governing bodies, and political power constantly shifts between the different branches.

The Islamic Leader of the Republic is the faqih, the supreme Islamic jurist. Ayatollah Khomeini was the first faqih.<sup>\*\*</sup> The faqih is picked from the clerical hierarchy based on Islamic qualifications. He appoints the Council of Guardians which certifies the competence of the candidates for President and the National Assembly. In addition, he appoints

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<sup>\*</sup> In 1989, Iran modified their constitution to expand the powers of the president and eliminate the position of prime minister.

<sup>\*\*</sup> Ayatollah Khomeini, as part of the revolution, changed the role of the clerics in Iranian politics. Normally, the senior clerics discouraged the participation of the clerics in the affairs of state. Therefore, when the clerics came to power, Khomeini was supported by the second tier of clerics, the hojjat-ol-Eslams, which was below the ayatollahs. The senior ayatollahs did not endorse Ayatollah Khomeini's idea of a faqih.

the highest judicial authorities and he is the Commander in Chief of the armed forces. When Ayatollah Khomeini died on June 3, 1989, the Assembly of Experts picked Ayatollah Khamenei, the President, as his successor.'

The executive branch consists of the president and the ministers. The president is elected for four years by a majority popular vote. He supervises the executive branch. He appoints the Council of Ministers, coordinates the decisions, and selects the policies to be taken up by the National Assembly. The ministers must be approved by the Parliament. In August 1989 Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani, the Speaker of the Majlis was elected president." President Rafsanjani has consolidated his power through appointments and the modified constitution. In 1992, he received widespread support for his moderate policies when the moderates swept the elections for Parliament. He was reelected on June 11, 1993.

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"But Ali Khamene'i [Khamenei], Khomeini's successor, lacked Khomeini's charisma, scholarly eminence, and the authority Khomeini could claim as the leader of the revolution....In fact, the requirements for the office of faqih had to be downgraded in an amended constitution to permit a cleric of lesser eminence such as Khamene'i to succeed Khomeini. The selection of Khamene'i as faqih weakened the overall authority of the state, whose very legitimacy was supposed to derive from the scholarly eminence and knowledge of Islamic law of the supreme Islamic jurist." Backhash, p. 73.

"President Rafsanjani received his power from ". . . his proximity to Khomeini, his ability to secure the services of technocrats with important skills and place them in key positions, his intelligent use of patronage, and his success in forming loose coalitions in support of his policies." *Ibid.*, p. 71.

The legislative branch has a parliamentary body called the Majlis, which consists of 270 members. They are elected for four years by direct popular vote. All legislation must be reviewed by the Council of Guardians (appointed by the faqih). The Council ensures constitutionality and ensures the bills conform to Islamic principles.

The judicial system consist of the Revolutionary Guard and the courts. The Revolutionary Guard is responsible for internal security. The judicial branch has a Supreme court and the four member High Council of the Judiciary. Together they enforce the laws and set judicial and legal policies and their responsibilities overlap. At President Rafsanjani's request, the Majlis combined the Revolutionary Guards and the army under one command structure. However, the Revolutionary Guard still has a lot of autonomy.

In 1988 Ayatollah Khomeini created the Council for Expediency that resolves the legislative issues that the Majlis and Council of Guardians disagree upon. It also advises the faqih on national policy. It is composed of the heads of all three branches, the clerical members of the Council of guardians, and members appointed by the Leader for three year terms. Additional members from the Majlis or Ministers may serve as required.

Although there is only one political party, power shifts between three main groups.\* Right now, the moderates control the government. They have widespread support in the middle and property classes. They are the majority faction in the Majlis. The second group, the smallest group, is the conservatives clerics. They are represented in the Council of Guardians, which can overturn legislation that is not in accordance with Islamic law. The last group is the radicals. They no longer control the government and are the minority faction in the Majlis. They are supported by university students, and some civil service and revolutionary organizations. These different groups are involved throughout all the branches of government. Despite the checks and balances and the shift from the radicals to the moderates, there is still tremendous resistance to change."

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\* "Iran has the politics of a ruling elite. Within the inner circle of the clerics and laymen in power -- in the government, the revolutionary organizations, the majlis, the mosque network, and the informal organizations of the Islamic Republic -- a degree of politics takes place. Factions compete over policies, financial reward, and control over the institutions of the state. But outside this circle, little dissent is tolerated." Ibid., p. 79.

"Nevertheless, the hands of Rafsanjani and of his government appear tied not so much by the organized radical opposition as by the still fragmented nature of power; by entrenched interests in the nationalized sector and in the cumbersome, over-inflated bureaucracy; and by widespread corruption that often seems to make economic programs hostage to special interests." Ibid., p. 77.

Internal Threats. There are two internal threats to our Revolution. The first is a power struggle among the clerics. The second is a lack of support from the general population if we cannot improve domestic conditions.

Cleric Power Struggles. The Council of Experts, an established government body, selects the faqih. Despite this legitimacy, the faqih needs government support or the faqih could be discredited. Ayatollah Khamenei and President Rafsanjani have successfully defeated threats against the faqih.\* A power struggle between the clerics that turns to force is possible because the Revolutionary Guard is closely tied to the clergy. A power struggle among the clerics could involve military forces.<sup>2</sup> However, this scenario is very unlikely to occur in the next ten years. The mechanism to choose a new faqih is in place. President Rafsanjani has been able to maintain a coalition to keep the faqih in power. The military has supported the faqih.

Domestic Conditions. The biggest threat to us is lack of significant progress in domestic conditions. Riots

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\* In autumn 1990 the radicals challenged Ayatollah Khamenei's authority and qualifications. President Rafsanjani and Ayatollah Khamenei lined up support from the army, the Revolutionary Guards, the Islamic propaganda organization, and Majlis deputies, and effectively stopped the radicals. In 1991 the radicals challenged Ayatollah Khamenei again by supporting Ayatollah Montazeri, Ayatollah Khomeini's initial successor, as supreme Leader. Ayatollah Khomeini had disqualified him.



have broken out over some government policies.' The Islamic Revolution failed to improve domestic conditions and President Rafsanjani was elected because he promised to deliver better conditions. If President Rafsanjani fails to deliver, there could be significant unrest." This could cause a backlash against the clerics."" However, the Revolutionary Guard has been very successful at quelling this unrest.

Conclusion. Our politics are likely to remain the same. We have a government with checks and balances. The moderates will continue to improve domestic conditions, but they must temper their policies to accommodate the radicals. There is little likelihood that the radicals will be voted back into power because the radicals were blamed for the policies that caused the poor domestic conditions. There is little

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\* In 1992 there were severe riots in Arak and other cities when municipal authorities tried to raze homes built by squatters. In Mashad, banks, government buildings, and police stations were burned. Ibid., p. 80.

" "The high level of public alienation, the lack of channels in which to express discontent, the fading support from the regime's natural base of support, the domination of technocrats without political sense - all of these trends make the Rafsanjani government look more and more like the Shah's regime from 1971 to 1978." Clawson, p. 45.

"" "Anti-clericalism, the reverse side of Persia's historical devotion to its Shiite divines, is rampant in post-Khomeini Iran. This hostility toward politicized clerics remains the single greatest threat to clerical rule, and its intensity is tied directly to the health of the economy." Edward G. Shirley, "Not Fanatics, and not Friends," The Atlantic Monthly, December, 1993, p. 108.

possibility that either a shift in the faqih or the President will dramatically shift our policies. These new political actors would have to balance all factions and garner support much like Ayatollah Khamenei and President Rafsanjani have done to remain in power.

## NOTES

1. For this appendix the primary sources were unpublished material titled "Background Notes: Iran," U.S. State Department, July 1993 and Shaul Bakhash, "Iranian Politics Since the Gulf War," The Politics of Change in the Middle East, Robert B. Sattelff, ed., (Washington: Westview Press, 1993).

2. This idea was discussed in Nikola B. Schahgaldian, The Iranian Military Under the Islamic Republic, Prepared for the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, RAND Corporation, March, 1987.

**APPENDIX II**  
**ORDER OF BATTLE**

## **ORDER OF BATTLE**

### **ARMY**

- 4 mechanized divisions consisting of**
  - 12 mechanized brigades**
  - 9 armored battalions**
  - 18 mechanized battalions**
- 6 infantry divisions**
- 1 airborne brigade**
- 1 special forces division with**
  - 4 brigades**
- 12 surface-to-air missile battalions**
- several air support units**
- several reserve battalions**

### **Equipment**

**(Equipment is of US origin unless otherwise noted.)**

### **Combat Vehicles**

#### **Tanks**

- 1,000 T-54 (USSR)**
- T-55 (USSR)**
- 260 T-59 (Czechoslovakia)**
- T-62 (USSR)**
- T-72 (USSR)**
- 50 Chieftain Mk 3/Mk 5 (Great Britain)**
- M47**
- M48**
- M60A1**
- 30 Scorpion light (Great Britain)**

#### **Armored Vehicles**

- 130 EE-9 Cascavel reconnaissance (Brazil)**
- 150 BMP-1 mechanized infantry (USSR)**
- 250 BTR-50/BTR-60 personnel carrier (USSR)**
- 250 M113 personnel carrier**
- ZSU-23-4 Shilka air defense (USSR)**

### **Artillery**

#### **Guns**

- 30 175-mm M107 self-propelled**
- 130-mm M46 towed**
- 75-mm M20 anti-tank recoilless**
- 57-mm M18 anti-tank recoilless**

#### **Air Defense Guns**

1,500 of the following types

- 57-mm ZSU-57-2 self-propelled (USSR)
- 37-mm M1939\*\* towed (USSR)
- 35-mm GDF Skyguard towed (Switzerland)
- 23-mm ZU-23 towed (USSR)

#### **Howitzers**

- 10 203-mm M110 self-propelled
- 155-mm M109A1 self-propelled
- 155-mm FH77 towed (Sweden)
- 155-mm GHN-45 towed (Austrian)
- 155-mm G5 towed (South Africa)
- 105-mm M101 towed
- 36 105-mm Oto Melara towed (Italy)

#### **Mortars**

3,000 including

- 120-mm towed (may be one of several types)
- 107-mm (4.2 in) M30 towed
- 81-mm M29 towed

#### **Multiple Rocket Launchers**

- 65 122-mm BM-21 (USSR)
- 107-mm Type 63 (China)
- 106-mm M40A/C

#### **Missiles/Rockets**

##### **Anti-Tank**

- BGM-71A TOW
- MGM-32A ENTAC (France)
- SS-11 (France)
- SS-12 (France)
- M47 Dragon

##### **Surface-to-Surface**

- SS-1C Scud B (USSR)
- Scorpion (USSR Scud C)
- Iran 130 (USSR Scud C)
- Oghab (Iran)
- Shahin 2 (Iran)
- Nazeat (Iran)

##### **Surface-to-Air**

- MIM-23 Improved Hawk
- SA-5 Gammon (USSR)

Other surface-to-air missiles, although used to some extent by the Iranian Army, are under the operational control of the Rev Guard.

**Army Aviation****Fixed-Wing Aircraft**

25 U-17 Cessna 185 Skywagon utility  
6 U-3 utility  
10 O-2A Skymaster observation  
2 F27 Troopship transport (Netherlands)  
5 Shrike Commander utility (Commander)  
2 Mystere-Falcon utility (France Falcon)

**Helicopters**

10 AH-1 Cobra attack  
60 CH-47C Chinook heavy transport  
250 Bell 214A Super Transporter transport  
20 AB205A utility (H-1H Huey)  
80 AB206 JetRanger transport (H-58A Kiowa)  
12 AB212 transport

**AIR FORCE**

8 fighter/ground attack squadrons  
1 interceptor squadron  
1 tanker/transport squadrons  
5 transport squadrons  
10 helicopter squadrons  
1 reconnaissance detachment  
1 training wing

**AIRCRAFT**

**JAN90      APR92**

		<b>FIGHTERS/GROUND ATTACK</b>
60	55	F-4D/E Phantom
75	70	F-5E/F Tiger II
30	15	F-14 Tomcat
0	16	F-6 (China J-6)
0	18	F-7 (China J-7)
14	38	MiG-29 Fulcrum** (USSR)
		<b>RECONNAISSANCE</b>
5	1	P-3F Orion
		<b>TANKER/TRANSPORT</b>
14	14	B707 Boeing 707
9	9	B747 Boeing 747
10	10	C-130E/H Hercules
6	10	F27 (Netherlands)
3	3	Aero Commander 690 (Commander)

		<b>TRAINERS</b>
10	10	T-33A Shooting Star
35	35	PC7 Turbo Trainer (Switzerland)
45	45	F-33A Bonanza
		<b>HELICOPTERS</b>
10	10	AB206A JetRanger utility (H-58A
Kiowa)		
5	5	AB212 transport (H-1N Twin Huey)
20	20	AB214C Super Transporter
2	1	CH-47 Chinook heavy cargo
2	2	S-61A4 amphibious transport (H-3)

Iraq contends that these aircraft include the following  
(not included in inventory total above):

- 24 Mirage F1
- 24 Su-24 Fencer
- 40 Su-22 Fitter
- 7 Su-25 Frogfoot
- 4 MiG-29 Fulcrum
- 7 MiG-23ML Flogger
- 4 MiG-23BN Flogger
- 1 MiG-23UB Flogger

#### MISSILES

##### Surface-to-air

- 25 Tigercat
- CSA-1 (China HQ-2 Red Arrow)
- Towed Rapier (Great Britain)
- SA-6 Gainful\*\* (USSR)

##### Air-to-Air

- AIM-54 Phoenix
- AIM-9 Sidewinder
- AIM-7 Sparrow

##### Air-to-Surface

- AS12 (France)
- AGM-65 Maverick
- AGM-84 Harpoon

#### NAVY/MARINES

#### SHIPS

The ships reportedly in service with the Iranian navy are difficult to verify because of losses incurred in the Eight-year War.



### **Submarines**

- 1 Iranian design (midget)
- 1 North Korean design (midget)

### **Destroyers**

- 1 DAMAVAND class (ex-British BATTLE class)
- 2 BABR class (ex-US ALLEN M. SUMNER, FRAM II class)

### **Frigates**

- 3 ALVAND class (ex-British VOSPER Mk 5 class)
- 2 BAYANDOR class (ex-US PF 103 class)

### **Fast Attack Craft**

- 10 KAMAN-class missile craft (France LA COMBATTANTE II class)
- 3 CHAHO-class gunboats (ex-Chinese)

### **Patrol Craft**

- 3 KAIVAN class (US Coast Guard Cape class)
- 3 PARVIN class (US Improved PGM 71 class)

### **Amphibious**

- 5 ex-British B47 WELLINGTON-class hovercraft
- 8 ex-British SRN 6 WINCHESTER-class hovercraft
- 4 ex-British HENGAM-class logistic landing ship
- 3 Dutch IRAN HORMUZ 21-class tank landing ships
- 4 South Korean IRAN HORMUZ 24-class landing ships
- 2 IRAN ASIR-class tank landing ships (ex-Japanese)
- 12 ROTORK-class utility landing craft

### **Mine Countermeasure**

- 1 SHAHROKH-class minesweeper (ex-US FALCON MSC 268 class)
- 1 KARKAS-class minesweeper (ex-US MSC 292 class)
- 1 HARISCHI-class minesweeper (US Cape)

Approximately 25 support ships, oilers, and tugs are also credited to the Iranian Navy. Approximately 40 armed fast attack craft, the infamous Iranian "speedboats" responsible for many attacks on shipping in the Persian Gulf, are in use with the Rev Guard.

### **MISSILES**

#### **Surface-to-surface**

- 100 C801 Ying Ji 6 (China)
- 50 Hai Ying 2 Silkworm\*\* (China)
- 100 Fei Lung 1 (Hai Ying 2 Silkworm\*\*)
- 200 Gabriel (Israel)
- several Sea Killer (Italy)

Iran has used both ship-launched and land-launched versions of its surface-to-surface missiles. Additional missiles are in service with the Rev Guard.

## MARINES

The Marine force consists of 3 battalions with approximately 5,000 active troops. Although the Marines are responsible for amphibious operations, it is the Rev Guard Marine Force that carries out most of the amphibious special operations and frogman-type activities. The Revolutionary Guard also takes priority over the regular Marines in the use of naval equipment.

## NAVAL AVIATION

### Aircraft

- 1 P-3F Orion patrol
- 8 Commander transport
- 4 F27 transport (Netherlands)
- 3 Falcon observation (France)

### Helicopters

- 10 AB206 Jetranger utility
- 15 AB205 transport
- 7 AB212 utility (H-1)
- 10 SH-3D Sea King anti-submarine (H-3)
- 2 RH-53D Sea Stallion mine countermeasure

Air-to-surface missile operations are a function of the Rev Guard.

## REV GUARD

### ORDER OF BATTLE

#### Ground Forces

The reformed organization of the Rev Guard consists of:

- 21 infantry divisions
- 3 engineering divisions
- 15 independent infantry brigades
- 21 air defense brigades
- 42 armored and artillery brigades
- several chemical warfare companies

Before the new structure was implemented, the Rev Guard consisted mainly of small, specialized offensive groups not organized according to any identifiable pattern. Specialized units such as missile brigades and coastal defense brigades have been incorporated into the post-war structure.

#### Naval Forces

The Pasdaran Navy operates from several island bases and launches attacks against Persian Gulf shipping from make-shift bases constructed on oil platforms. No common fleet structure has been identified, but the basic pattern seems to be small

"naval guerrilla" formations. The Marine units of the Pasdaran are organized into 3 Amphibious Brigades, and use regular Navy equipment. The Marines are especially skilled in frogman (swimmer) operations.

#### **Air Forces**

The Pasdaran maintains little of its own equipment using, instead, that of the regular military. During the Persian Gulf conflict, however, Rev Guard forces were given priority access to the equipment needed for battle.

#### **Ships**

- 2 Midget submarines (North Korea)
- 3 Mini submarines (Iranian)
- 35 BOGHAMMAR-type fast-attack craft (Sweden)

#### **Aircraft**

- 40 F-6 fighter (China J-6)
- 60 F-7 Airguard fighter (China J-7)
- 3 MFI-17 Mushshak trainers (Pakistan)

#### **Artillery**

- 50 107-mm Type 63 multiple rocket launchers (China)

#### **Missiles**

##### **Anti-Tank**

- 100 BGM-71 TOW (US)

##### **Surface-to-Surface**

- 100 Hai Ying 2 Silkworm\*\* (China)
- 100 Fei Lung 7 (China C801 Ying Ji 6)

##### **Surface-to-Air**

- 100 FIM-92A Stinger (US)
- 250 MIM-23 Improved HAWK (US)
- 300 RBS70 Rayrider (Sweden)
- several SA-7 Grail\*\* (USSR)
- several SA-6 Guideline\*\* (USSR)

Equipment listed in the Iranian Armed Forces orders of battle may be in use with the Rev Guard.

**APPENDIX III**

**TERRORISM**

## TERRORISM

We are often accused of terrorism. Terrorism to one party is unconventional warfare to another. The West accuses us of terrorism; yet, we consider the use of unconventional force in certain situations justified. Our involvement in this unconventional warfare falls in two categories. First, we are committed to preserving our nation. We will not allow dissidents to destroy Iran. Second, we are committed to supporting Islamic movements. Occasionally, we provide direct support at a low level such as Sudan. The use of force to support Islamic goals is not a state issue but a religious issue and is a contentious issue between the radicals and the moderates. There are no boundaries for Islam. However, not all of these terrorist groups are officially sanctioned by the government.\*

Our use of unconventional warfare continues against the enemies of our regime. Dissidents are soliciting support from outside powers to destroy our Islamic government. After many years we finally eliminated foreign influence and we will not tolerate a dissident reversing our success. Unconventional warfare inside European states is detrimental to our international relations, but our actions have not affected the

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\* Since the Shiite clergy is self supporting, the clergy can use the money to support groups outside the government. This means that radical members of the clergy can support terrorist groups from Iran, but this support is outside official government channels.

general status of our European relations. Europe continues to trade with us."

We have stopped supporting religious insurgencies with nations on our borders. We recognize that the Sunnis are not going to support our Shiite revolution. In addition, we were unable to convince other Shiites, such as those in Iraq, to join with us. Once the radicals lost power, our moderates were able to stop most of the officially sanctioned insurgencies within the area of our vital interests. However, the radicals have not stopped supporting terrorist groups. We check the radicals from operating within our sphere of influence by political maneuvers within our internal politics.

We will support Islamic movements such as the Islamic movement in Sudan." In this case, we are merely helping a growing internal Islamic movement. This support has not significantly affected our international relations.

Of more importance we have been blamed for terrorism in both Egypt and Algeria."" We are not responsible for these

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\* European response to our unconventional activities in Europe has been very muted. The reaction is mostly verbal. Rick Atkinson, "Killing of Iranian Dissenters: Bloody Trail Back to Tehran," The Washington Post, 1993, p. A35.

" Most of the insurgencies are in areas peripheral to Iran's real interest: Tunisia, Jordan, Lebanon, Bosnia and Israel.

"" In 1990, the Islamic Salvation Army (FIS) appeared to be legally coming to power in Algeria. The FIS was allowed to participate in local elections and succeeded. Parliamentary control seemed certain. The Front de la Liberation Nationale (FLN) canceled the elections because the ruling secular party  
(continued...)

Islamic movements. In 1992 there were several terrorist acts by religious extremist groups in Egypt. Egypt claimed that we were behind the terrorism.\* We were not. In Algeria, the government repressed an Islamic movement. Algerian repression caused the terrorism, not us.

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\*(...continued)

was corrupt, the FIS was not a welcome alternative for the middle class, and the FIS would surely restrict democracy when Islamic law was implemented. The FLN then cracked down on the FIS and the FLN charged that the FIS were subsidized by Iran which was widely reported by the media. Stephen Pelletiere, Islamic Terror and the West: A Question of Priorities, (Strategic Studies Institute. U.S. Army War College: 1 June 1993), p. 2.

\* "[President] Mubarak claimed that his security forces had uncovered an underground terrorist network, the jama'a al Islamiyya (the organization of Islam); the jama'a, he said was controlled by Iran." There are small terrorists groups in Egypt. However, there is no evidence that these groups are working together or are cooperating together. There is no evidence to support ties to Iran. Pelletiere, pp. 3-4.

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